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HITLER

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CHAPTER I

A REBEL

THE peasants of Lambach did not like the Hitler family. "Herr" Hitler was only a customs "Unteroffizier" on pension and there was no reason why he should give himself the airs of a State official. The peasants called him "Herr" as a joke, because he insisted on it. Later they grew so used to it that the village knew him only as Herr Hitler. Lambach, which could boast of a retired inspector of the imperial *gendarmérie* and of the widow of a Government Councillor, was not impressed by the former non-commissioned officer of the Austrian customs force.

The Hitlers were foreigners, Franz Milzner, the cartwright, liked to remind his admirers in the *Tavern of the Red Lion*. They had come from Braunau on the Inn, some thirty miles from Lambach, in another section of Upper Austria. Franz did not like the competition of Herr Hitler, because, although a farmer's son, he wanted to be treated as a gentleman. After all, he had a friend in Vienna who was an official in the Ministry of Agriculture. Milzner was heard with respect, as his voice was strong and his fists were like iron.

Why should Herr Hitler, the villagers wanted to know,



go around with his nose in the air? He was only the son of a pedlar, who could have won the championship of poverty against a church mouse. And Herr Hitler's wife, that Bohemian woman, who spoke a broken German, did not look as if she had been born in the Vienna Hofburg.

Although morose in public, Herr Hitler was a different man in the best room of the whitewashed house at the intersection of Linzerstrasse and Kirchengasse, where the family made its home. Here, the hero of interminable Sunday-afternoon talks over a glass of red wine was Unteroffizier Hitler. His cronies around the table felt the Linzer sausages repaid them amply for listening to a tale told many times. They were proud to be taken into the confidence of the man who, almost single-handed, had held the frontier at Braunau on the Inn. It was not, of course, the enemy against whom the front had to be held. The children on the Bavarian side of the boundary had been intolerable. They had had no conception that at a frontier one world ends and another world begins. How could a customs non-commissioned officer retain his dignity, running after naughty brats and depositing them on the opposite side of the frontier?

After an impressive silence the climax of the story was reached.

"When I was in Vienna . . ." Father Hitler began.

Although Frau Hitler and "Bub'" Adolf had heard the episode many times they were always newly impressed. This was the famous meeting with the Minister which sounded like a tale out of the *Thousand and One Nights*. Every time the story was told Father Hitler remembered some new detail. In reality he had gone to Vienna to speak to a subordi-



nate official about his promotion. As years went by the subordinate official in the Ministry had become the Minister himself, expressing to Father Hitler the gratitude of the Fatherland for protecting the interests of the Monarchy on the borderland.

When Adolf was twelve, his father saw no reason why his son should not become a State official, although the boy objected strenuously. Not that Adolf was such a prodigy that he knew what he wanted to be. He knew, however, what he did not want, and in the long list of those things study stood in the first place.

There the interests of the boy and his father clashed. The elder Hitler, rejected by Lambach as a gentleman, wished his son to redeem the family prestige. To him, whose life had been bounded by the regulations for customs non-commissioned officers, a desk in one of the Ministries seemed the pinnacle of a career. Frau Hitler assented to the plan, Adolf dissented, and so it was decided that he should be a State official.

The Hitler family never lived long enough in any place and it was too undistinguished to have left a mark on the community. Whatever little information is available about these early years comes mostly from Hitler himself, and it is sketchy and unreliable. Hitler is ashamed of his humble origin and what he leaves unsaid is more than what he says. Of his mother he never speaks. That she was a Bohemian is an accepted fact. From her he has inherited his love of talk. Her Slavic mysticism had much to do with his attachment to mystic dogmas and with his horror of facing facts. In a German-Austrian environment young Hitler had prob-



ably much to suffer from a certain condescension among the native boys. Bohemians were considered second-class citizens in pre-war Austria-Hungary, and a thoroughbred German-Austrian in a small village could not help feeling toward them a certain sense of superiority.

Smarting under the discrimination, the young boy may have been imbued with a sense of injustice which sought escape in attempts to be taken for a full-fledged Austrian. The little peasant boys of the village, with straw-like hair and blue eyes, were secure in their racial superiority, even though they did not know what it meant. Those memories may have had much to do with Hitler's worshipping the Nordic idol in later years.

The "Realschule" at Linz, of which Adolf was nominally a student, did not see much of him. The future government official preferred to take long walks in the foothills of the Hunruckwald. The exploration of those forests had been a long-standing ambition of the young boy.

Adolf had an army, which consisted of a child much smaller than himself. The army had not only the duty of winning wars for its general but also of keeping him supplied with sweets and, if necessary, serving as a court clown. At first the wars were carried on against the Prussians, but when Adolf came across an illustrated account of the Franco-Prussian war, the enemy was the French.

Young Hitler liked to make drawings in the light of the family oil lamp. His father thought it was a shame to waste good oil on something that was entirely useless because it did not help one to become a State official. Artists were mere rabble in Father Hitler's eyes. All the world knew



that they led disordered lives and they were never praised by Ministers for saving the fatherland at the frontier station of Braunau on the Inn.

To the Hitlers and the other inhabitants of Lambach the centre of the universe was Linz, the capital of Upper Austria, just a few miles away. The peasants of Lambach took their produce to Linz every Wednesday morning and they spent the evening in Uncle Spressel's beer-garden *Unter den Linden*.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, when Adolf had just turned twelve, Linz was a gay Austrian town, and the Hitler boy found it to his taste. The ambition of his life was to become an attendant in the local theatre or to be a waiter at Uncle Spressel's. He realized, however, that his first choice could not be gratified, since the theatre had only one attendant—an old man with a decided distaste for young boys.

Nevertheless, a dream came true when with a few kreuzers he bought a ticket for the gallery where he could hear everything and even see something. What he saw was a marvellous piece about an apple, a tyrant and a man called Wilhelm Tell. Some twenty-five years after this event, Adolf Hitler decided that probably it was due to the strong impression made on him by the play that he became the champion of German rights.

The Museum of Linz was not quite so exciting as "Wilhelm Tell." It contained many relics of the peasant rebellion led by a Stephan Fadinger centuries before. Fadinger's idea was that peasants should work less and eat more, so that they should not die so young. The landowners thought



Fadinger was heartless to prevent peasants from dying young, since this earth is a vale of sorrows, and so they roasted him on hot grills, that he should not suffer for other people's griefs. Young Hitler had no sympathy for Fadinger and he thought the landowners were not wrong.

In school Adolf was not the teacher's pet. He had a way of thinking "No" even when he had to say "Yes." He revolted instinctively against the teachers' absolute authority. They called him an agitator and treated him with distrust. One of the things he did not see was why he should sing the Austrian national anthem at school celebrations. He preferred to hum "Deutschland, Deutschland über Alles," which was the hymn of the Reich.

Adolf Hitler began to take a youthful pride in his dislike of the Austrian ruling house. This was the result of a precocious bravado and of a desire to be different. His upbringing in a frontier town helped to make him a rebel. In the low-ceilinged house at Braunau, on the Austro-Bavarian frontier, where he was born in 1889, he had seen in his earliest childhood as much of Germany as of Austria. It was great fun to see the soldiers on the other side of the boundary march under a different flag to the tune of other songs; to hear them obey commands that were different from those of the Austrians. The sky-blue uniform of the Bavarian infantry with the red cuff was more attractive than the dark blue uniform of the Austrians. The blue and white flag of the Bavarians pleased him more than the black and yellow flag of the Austrians.

His cousin, Ludwig Schultze, a much bigger boy than himself, who lived on the Bavarian side, scarcely a hundred



yards away, used to tease him about the Habsburgs who had built up their empire by marriage. Where was Austria's Frederick the Great and that long line of illustrious rulers about whom Ludwig, fresh from school, liked to talk ?

Before coming to Lambach, the family had lived for some time in Passau, on the Bavarian side. The Bavarians there had a way of looking down upon their neighbours in Austria. Those poor benighted relatives were at least half a century behind the Reich.

"Look at the two emperors," the baker in Ludwigstrasse liked to say to Adolf's father. Then the two men would begin to talk politics. Hitler senior was slightly contemptuous of Germany because she had been an empire only a few years. Austria was different, as she had traditions going back centuries.

"But look at your Francis Joseph," the baker would insist.

At these words Hitler the Elder stiffened. As long as he wore His Majesty's uniform he could not permit anyone to speak disrespectfully about the emperor. So he refused to look at Francis Joseph and listened with disapproval to the baker's monologue. From the editorials of the local paper the baker had culled a few pet words which he always managed to put into circulation.

"Austria harks back to feudal times," he said, and patted himself on the back in thought. He would have preferred to know what "feudal" meant, but he realized that having used the word so long it would be awkward for him to make inquiries.

In sombre silence Hitler the Elder listened to him. "Feu-



dal” had made a hit and he decided not to let the baker smile so knowingly.

“Ours is a different ideology,” he retorted, and now it was his turn to beam. The baker was floored. “Ideology” had proved too strong for him.

Adolf had often witnessed these verbal duels and was proud of the permission to listen to something he did not understand.

The baker was a believer in Germany’s racial superiority. He had heard the words “racial superiority” at a public meeting, where a Pomeranian with an execrable accent spoke about it all the evening. The drift of the address had escaped the baker, but he remembered the two words.

“Look at all the Hungarians, Czechs, Poles, South Slavs and Italians you have,” the baker told Hitler the Elder at his next visit. This was not a fair demand, because the baker had meanwhile studied the question in his favourite paper, while Hitler was not prepared to accept the challenge.

“We are one nation,” the baker went on, quoting a paragraph that he had memorized, “taking great pride in our racial force. We are out to capture a place in the sun and not, as our enemies assert”—here he registered a timid stage smile—“not the entire sun.”

This was too beautiful to be contradicted, so the baker had a good day and that night in bed he rehearsed his triumph and awoke next morning with a smile.

If Adolf Hitler had not been taught at school what great rulers the Habsburgs were he would not have taken to singing the German national anthem. Although he had no opinion as yet about the relative merits of the German and Austrian ruling houses, he had an instinctive resistance to



authority and the demon of negation began to stir in him. Around his mouth there ran a hard line and his eyes seldom lit up with childish glow.

Reading history was Adolf's great passion and he began to take an interest in the dictators of the past. Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar and Charlemagne were his heroes. His interest in German history made him read some of the juvenile literature dealing with the Reich's revival after the Napoleonic wars. Austrian boys were trained to take a serious interest in great problems and there was nothing unusual in Adolf—at nearly thirteen—being a voracious reader of popular histories. Nor was it unusual for him to wish he had been born a hundred years before when young boys had a better chance of becoming great army leaders.

The elder Hitler died when Adolf was in his fourteenth year. The small pension was not enough for the boy's schooling, so he was definitely out of the race as a future State official. To make both ends meet he had to accept odd jobs which he found distasteful and non-lucrative. A few more years at Lambach with a mother who never quite recovered from the blow caused by the loss of her husband brought no new hope into the boy's life. He could have become a peasant or, perhaps, a non-commissioned officer in the customs force. But he had higher ambitions. Since he could not march to victory with Wallenstein's armies he began to think of becoming an architect's apprentice in Vienna.

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When he climbed out of a third-class carriage at the Western Station of Vienna only fifty gulden was between



him and hunger. The money was in a pouch around his neck and he carried a bundle on his back as he walked down Mariahilferstrasse with the careful step of the village boy. He was now over sixteen, and he had lost his mother a few days before.

The family's piece of land had been sold to pay for the expenses of the funeral and so Adolf could not become a farmer even if he had had the wish. The neighbours in Lambach had held out no hope to him. The family had never been accepted as part of the community. One had to be born in Lambach to be treated as a native son.

Adolf made an attempt to be admitted to the Vienna Academy of Arts, but was refused. A country boy with untrimmed locks of hair dangling in front of his eyes and with a score of soiled drawings had little chance of success. The fifty gulden was no great wealth even in Vienna's proletarian quarters and the Austrian capital was not looking just then for a Julius Cæsar or Frederick the Great. Nor did the Ministry of War know that Adolf had been the leader of an army of one man in Lambach, on the banks of the Traun.

Adolf was too young and inexperienced to know how to wheedle fortune out of its hiding-place. Although Vienna was prosperous, the centre of a powerful empire, it was not prosperous or powerful enough to make life easy for peasant boys with hungry eyes and healthy appetites. The late Unteroffizier of the Austrian customs force would have been heartbroken to have seen his son visiting the haunts of misery in the metropolis where the father had been honoured. Young Hitler had the use of a bed—not of a room—which he could not occupy before a certain hour. He read by the



light of a candle, because gas was expensive and the landlady a niggard. He obtained work at last but it was of a kind which no young man with an ambition for Cæsar's mantle would have been glad to have. He became a builder's labourer. His function was to cart the rubbish away. He had to get up before the sun and his foreman was a vulgar cad.

When the whistle signalled noon he dropped the wheelbarrow, drank his bottle of milk, and ate his black bread with a piece of bacon. Resting on his heap of rubbish he listened to the stories of Vienna's proletarians, hardened to misery. He felt sorry for his companions, most of whom were much older than he was, but it never occurred to him that he would have to live all his life on the scaffoldings of newly-erected buildings. Most of the men on the structure were organized Socialists and those who were not held their tongues. During the noon-rest some harsh words were said about capitalistic exploitation. Members of the building gangs improvised speeches with the usual staple of party propaganda. "The tools of production must be socialized," they said. "The distribution of wealth must be equalized. Wages must be increased,—profits must be decreased. The proletarians of all countries must be united."

This was new to Hitler. In Lambach he had never heard of socialism. He might have liked these novel ideas if they had been expressed with less finality. The surer his fellow-workers were of their cause, the less inclined Hitler was to accept their word. The spirit of negation in him was more powerful than himself.

A comrade suggested that he should join the Socialist



Trade Union, but Hitler was evasive. He would first have to study the party literature. He began to study the literature of the anti-Socialists. He wanted to contradict the proletarians. He could not help thinking that, in spite of his tattered appearance, he was not one of the workers of the hand. In his day-dreams he still saw himself at the head of victorious armies, as he had seen himself on the banks of the Traun.

Was he a "yellow dog," the others began to ask, and he overheard some threatening words. The half-wit of the gang rolled up his sleeves and announced that someone was going to be flung down from the house.

While Adolf Hitler was carrying rubbish on slippery planks among jeering labourers, he turned over plans in his mind to take revenge for their insolence. He had to admit that the others knew more about party slogans, but they had not his explosive hatreds. At heart he was satisfied with the resentment he had aroused. At least he knew that he was somebody and that he had the courage of his discontent. Perhaps the day would come when he could take time by the forelock. Perhaps he would learn how to grasp the skirts of happy chance. He was beginning to have his convictions: first impressions sealed with prejudice.

He read the *Neue Freie Presse* and the *Wiener Tagblatt*, organs of high capitalism, with a great deal of defiance. While they expressed his sentiments on a variety of subjects, they did so in a politely mocking vein which he disliked. He found their arguments weak and vacillating. Obviously, the editors gave too much thought to the reasonings of their opponents. Frederick the Great would have disposed of socialistic arguments in a different way.

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"The editors are Jews," someone told Hitler. "The Socialist leaders, too, are Jews." It was an anti-Semite who said this,—a Christian Socialist, an admirer of Karl Lueger.

The city administration of Vienna encouraged anti-semitism. Karl Lueger, the Burgomaster, clever, efficient and fanatically anti-Jewish, was the idol of the Christian Socialists. The Jews were to be blamed for everything, he declared, and the crowd shouted hurrah. The Jews were the ringleaders of both socialism and capitalism. The explanation was simple and it found favour in Hitler's eyes. He began to read anti-semitic papers and the literature of the Christian Socialists. No doubt, he thought, the Jews were part of a conspiracy to ruin the Christian world for their own benefit. Socialists and Jews were in league, while the Nordic race bore the brunt of social inequality. While carrying the rubbish to the dump heap, Hitler saw himself an Aryan god, tall and blond, his eyes sparkling with indignation. Then he slipped and a spadeful of dirt landed on a man's head one floor below.

"You fool," the man shouted and shook his fist at him.

Hitler dumped the rubbish on the heap. He did it for years,—five or six years was it?—he no longer knew how long. He had other jobs when building operations were at a standstill. He was popular nowhere, and he did not mind being hated. In his room—now he could afford to rent an entire room, instead of a bed—he was reading about the Socialists and the Jews. Forgotten was the humiliation of Lambach. He felt himself a pure Nordic, unlike the others, who were tainted with Jewish socialism.

In his free time he crossed the Danube Canal and pene-



trated into enemy land. In Lambach he saw no Jews and in Linz they looked like Christians. Here, in Vienna's Leopoldstadt, they looked like the anti-Christ. They had ringlets on their temples and wore long gabardine kaftans. Their women wore artificial hair and their children had large black eyes.

"Only Nordics are clean," a wise man in Mödling, just outside Vienna, began to preach. Karl Lueger echoed his words in the accents of a statesman, and Hitler was convinced.

Hitler found his excursions to Leopoldstadt highly pleasant. He liked to study his enemies. In the parks of the Jewish section he listened to their talk and although he did not know what they said he knew they were conspiring against his race. He knew the Jew intimately, not through personal contact, but through his imagination. Those gusts of hatred and passionate dialogues with himself relieved the monotony of years which went by with no hope of any change.

"I had gone to Vienna," he said several years later when he stood accused of high treason against the German nation, "and I began to study the social and racial problems and the Marxian movement. I left Vienna a convinced anti-Semite, a mortal enemy of the Marxian *Weltanschauung*, and a pan-German."

About two years before the outbreak of the world war Hitler left Vienna for Munich. Only one man—Hitler himself—could say why he had left the Austrian capital. Yet he has never given a satisfactory answer. His statement that as a young man in his early twenties he knew that Austria's fate would be decided in Germany is no explanation. He was



of military age when he left Austria. Either he had left the country before he came before the recruiting commission, in which case the Austrian law regarded him as a deserter, or he had been rejected for military service as unfit. This would have been just as devastating for a young man to whom racial superiority and fitness for military service were identical.

“Austria was not then a German country,” Hitler’s friends would say. “That is why he left Vienna, the air of which was contaminated with the breath of Slavs, Magyars and Latins.”

Even this explanation ignores the question of what had happened to Hitler’s military service in Austria. Why did he have to wait two years before joining the Bavarian army during the war, when he would have been conscripted anyway?

In Munich Hitler continued to make as little stir in the world as any proletarian. He worked as a carpenter and handy-man when there was something to do, and he made drawings for newspapers. He had no friends and few acquaintances. His pessimism seldom left him and in his day-dreams he no longer attacked the enemy but saw himself an architect’s draughtsman, eating meals at regular hours, reading his paper in front of a warm stove, and leading the simple life of a small bourgeois. If in those days Adolf Hitler had disappeared for ever few people would have missed him. The police would have looked for him a day or two, and two lines in the *Neueste Nachrichten* would have told the reader that a man had disappeared. It is probable that his name would have been misspelled. In Munich, as in Vienna, he was a man “whose name is writ on water.”



CHAPTER II

A HUMAN CIPHER DEFIES DEATH

THE Sixteenth Bavarian Infantry Regiment "List" had an eventless night, except for an incident toward midnight which was soon forgotten. Karl Schimmer of Predigstuhl in the Bavarian Wald had just crawled out of his shelter, stretched and yawned, when a bullet whizzed into his mouth and made a hole at the base of his skull. The incident roused mild interest among Karl's comrades. One of them, the company jester, made the remark that some such punishment should be inflicted on all those who snored. But the weather was dismal, and no one laughed.

From the east, the march of a sickly light began. It forced the glaring rockets and the searchlights to recede, but it gave impetus to the rain. For a few minutes the world was still enough for the splash of the raindrops to be heard.

The watch of Corporal Melzer showed seven o'clock when the earth burst into flames to the accompaniment of a thousand cannon. The crashing sounds of a morning gone mad sped through the lines like a cosmic hurricane. Out of the mud, thousands of forms like spectres arose and leapt from one mud-hole to another, falling prostrate with resounding thuds and projecting their bodies into the air like players in some ghastly puppet show.

For days the German sixth army, under Crown Prince



Rupprecht of Bavaria, and the new fourth army, under Duke Albrecht of Württemberg, had been attacking the crest of the ridge which shut off Ypres from the east and the north. On November 11, 1914, the Germans rallied their forces for the final effort. The following day General Headquarters broadcast the news that, the night before, young regiments, singing "Deutschland, Deutschland über Alles" had broken into the enemy lines west of Langemark and occupied them after a battle of bayonets. Adolf Hitler, private in the Bavarian regiment List, was among the young men who marched into danger with the national anthem on their lips.

This was three months after Hitler had submitted his humble petition to the Kabinettskanzlei of His Most Gracious Royal Majesty, King Ludwig III of Bavaria, asking for admission to a Bavarian regiment as a volunteer. Would the chancellery discover that he was a subject of the Habsburg empire and would they force him to return to his native land? Or would they overlook such details in the press of important matters?

Two days later the order was in his hands which permitted him to join the army under the blue-white flag. The following day he wore his "feldgrau" uniform.

To most other young men the question of serving under the flag of the Wittelsbachs or of the Habsburgs would not have made much difference. If it came to a comparison of the merits of the two dynasties, Habsburg would always steal a march on the Wittelsbach. In the Almanac of Gotha the House of Austria occupied a place of honour, while the House of Bavaria appeared in the Cinderella rôle of minor royalty.

The Prussians might joke about the Bavarians occupying



a place between men and the Austrians, but the Bavarians knew better. Were they not a Christian folk as early as the seventh century when the site of present-day Prussia was the happy hunting-ground of pagan Slavs? Was not Bavaria's own Regensburg the capital of Louis the German after the partition of Charlemagne's empire, when the Mark of Brandenburg, which later became Prussia, was nothing more than a wilderness infested by hordes of semi-Oriental tribes? Had not the Bavarians been the subjects of that famed king, Arnulf the Bad, who had repelled the attacks of the Hungarians and saved the western world?

The average Bavarian may know little about these comparisons of history, but Adolf Hitler was familiar with the subject. He was in high spirits when he entered the vast cellar of the Bürgerbräu where the Ramschl band entertained a medley of civilians and soldiers with a pot-pourri of patriotic songs. Cheeks were flushed, beer jugs were emptied, threats were uttered against the enemy, and there was much noise and joy. Hitler was with two comrades, genuine Bavarians from Burglengenfeld and Schnabelwald, basking in the glory reflected upon them by their uniforms. Girls smiled at them and offered them flowers. The soldier men were in great vogue. In the cellar of the Bürgerbräu the two Bavarians and the Austrian used strong language about the "Kukuksbrüder" and the "Saupreuss"—the Austrians and the Prussians. The night was warm, the music was good and girls' eyes were flashing. "Perhaps," Adolf Hitler thought, "I'll be a corporal. Let the peasants of Lambach and the Sozis of Vienna see that the Hitler boy is of a different stuff."

On the Exerzierplatz of Munich, Hitler was taught how



to kill a man. "Obedience," his officers instructed him, and his heart went out to the men to whom he owed loyalty. One might have thought that Germany's fate depended on the energy with which Adolf Hitler stepped out in goose march.

The newspapers were full of victories. The Kaiser was on his way to Paris and soon there would be no enemy. "When the leaves fall we shall be home," Wilhelm II said, and Hitler anxiously watched the emerald of the leaves on the banks of the Isar turning to copper. Would he be in time on the battlefield to continue the chase of the enemy? The front was the place for young men to distinguish themselves and he wanted nothing better than distinction.

Was Adolf Hitler to be cheated out of war and glory? Was he to be disappointed with an early peace, instead of being given his rightful chance to kill his fellow-man? October came, and Hitler was not thought to be sufficiently initiated into the secrets of the goose-step to be despatched to the front. His impatience now knew no bounds. How Hitler wished to see himself in a heroic pose on the Wyttschaete ridge, silhouetted against the setting sun, leading an attack against Zaanvoorde and Hollebeke.

At last he was in the train carrying him and hundreds of others to the front. For the first time in his life he set his eyes on the Rhine which he had adopted as his own national river. He sang at the top of his voice with the others the sacred words :

"Fest steht und treu
Die Wacht am Rhein."

During four days and nights the grande finale of the first Ypres offensive was played to the tune of a crescendo of fire,



wild hurrahs, and screams of agony. With the rest of his company Adolf Hitler jumped from one mudpool into the other, plunged his bayonet into soft human flesh, ran for shelter, and prayed for his life. Entire sections of trenches were purged of their human contents and were replenished again by hopping phantoms, terror-stricken and grim. They hugged the soil from which issued a strong odour of blood and rain. They thought of their wives and children, and went on killing with bitter gusto and fear.

On Höhenpunkt No. 60 Private Hitler did not feel so heroic as he had felt in the Bürgerbräu. He was one of the human rats, guided by instinct and not by reason. He was dazed by the crashing shells, the smell of explosions and of the dead men. He felt insignificant, and he had moments when he no longer dreamed of becoming a corporal in the Bavarian regiment List. He knew that he was under the command of Crown Prince Rupprecht and he would have thought it a great event to see him face to face. Ambitious though he was, he would have laughed at the suggestion that one day he would fight a political duel with the son of Bavaria's King as an equal. He had heard of the exploits of General Erich von Ludendorff, chief of staff of the German army in East Prussia, but he would have thought anyone insane who would have suggested that the celebrated general would one day acknowledge Private Hitler as his superior.

Four days later Hitler's regiment was relieved. They had looked death in the face and now they were men. Some of them thought of the warm soup and soft straw waiting for them behind the lines and they began to sing. Others thought of the time they would have to go back into the flam-



ing hell, and they were mute. They stumbled over dead comrades and the ruins of farmhouses. The war had appeared much more heroic in the beer cellars of Munich. How many of them would have remained in the trenches if there had been no court-martial to keep warm their patriotism?

"In those early days of the war," Hitler wrote ten years later, "I tried to down my cowardice and finally courage won the day. But happiness and exhilaration had yielded to a calm and keen sense of duty."

History leaves no records of the achievements of private soldiers, and little is known about Hitler's war career. In later years he recorded his criticism of some phases of the campaign. He did his duty as well as any soldier in his regiment, sometimes even better. He tried to kill as many enemy soldiers as he could without endangering his own life. He may have had the prowess of a Siegfried, the military genius of a Julius Cæsar, and the eloquence of a St. Paul, and yet he could not have achieved more in the trenches. As a private in the Bavarian army he was doomed to be a cipher.

If, in the middle of 1916, German army headquarters, in an irresponsible moment, had asked for Adolf Hitler's opinion about the war, it might have received some useful information. But army headquarters knew it was the seat of all wisdom and did not ask for the advice of any common soldier.

Yet, who knows but the war might have taken a different turn if provision had been made at army headquarters to have a claim not only on the lives of young soldiers but also on their brains? The generals behind the lines knew nothing about the morale of the rank and file and they did not care much about it. Their short visits to the trenches gave



them no idea of what life was like in the mud-holes. In their calculations the privates appeared not as individuals but in bunches of tens of thousands. If the duty of a young soldier in the Bavarian army had not been fulfilled by doing his utmost to die for the fatherland and if he had been under obligation to use his head to devise means for the more efficient protection of the Fatherland, Adolf Hitler would not have been in a mud-mole in the trenches. He may have had even then some of the qualities that made him play such an outstanding rôle in the Germany of the next decade.

While trench life did not encourage rebellious thoughts, Hitler could not help meditating over the inefficiency of German propaganda. Unbeknown to the world, the future master of German nationalistic agitation was germinating in the trenches. There was much grinning in the ranks when enemy airplanes dropped bundles of denunciatory leaflets against the Prussian rule. These leaflets addressed the Bavarian soldiers as friends and called on them to rise against the Kaiser who represented Prussian junkerism. "We are fighting the Kaiser," the enemy leaflets said, "and not the German people." History was drafted into service to prove that between the two nations, the Bavarians and Prussians, antagonism had always been ingrained.

The Bavarian soldiers grinned, and their gun fire was increased. The enemy was to see that even though they were Bavarians, above all they were Germans. Week after week, month after month, the enemy planes dropped their bundles on the regiments. The propaganda was absurd, but it was persistent. If you tell a man the same absurd thing a thousand times he will swear to it in the end. What is truth if



not the product of endless propaganda? Those generals behind the lines should have done more than assign a few more anti-aircraft cannons behind the Bavarian front. They should have counteracted the effect of the insidious leaflets. They should have followed the example of the enemy in organizing propaganda not only for the consumption of the trenches but also for the benefit of those left at home. They should have stirred up the world with their version of the story, as that shrewd Englishman, Lord Northcliffe, was doing in England.

But Private Hitler could give no expression to such thoughts. His comrades, if he had told them about his musings, would have doubted his sanity. As to army headquarters, it continued to display a complete lack of interest in the meditations of private soldiers. Besides, these were as inaccessible to them as the kingdom of heaven is to an assassin.

While the expression of thoughts was impossible, even generals had not yet devised means to prevent a soldier from thinking. The future success of Adolf Hitler as a tribune was in large measure due to his experience as cannon fodder in the trenches. How he would have liked his patriotic fervour to be strengthened by stirring talks! How all that mass of humanity, rotting in the trenches, felt the need of being told what all the carnage was about instead of taking its loyalty for granted—a loyalty conditional on the existence of courts-martial and summary executions!

As the years wore on and the thrill of killing and the fear of being killed was worn down to a routine, enthusiasm gave way to resignation. War was a duty that had to be carried on and it was more pleasant to do it well than to do it half-



heartedly. One becomes accustomed to waking every day for the day of his execution. "A wound," was the dream and obsession of the soldier at the front.

"Er hat sich einen Finger weggeschossen," a private would whisper into the ear of a comrade and both would look wistfully after a man carried down the connecting trenches to the field hospital.

Adolf Hitler was no longer worried that the war would end too soon. He was to have all the thrill he wanted before the day of glory would be on its way. Did he want peace? He was not so sure. Going back to Munich as a carpenter's assistant was no inducement. He might yet rise in the army to the rank of a corporal and then the war might end. Was he bitter against the enemy? He was not so sure of that either. He hated the Habsburgs more than the Windsors and he was rubbing shoulders with the soldiers of the House of Austria. "United we march," Kaiser Wilhelm II declared, and the illustrated pictures showed him in the company of Crown Prince Karl, who was so soon to become Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary.

Yet Hitler was angry with the enemy with a professional anger. He was a soldier and he had to kill the foe. No doubt the French had been conspiring against Germany. Queerly enough he had no strong feelings against the English. The French were different. They were small and dark, an enemy race.

Serbia was under the heels of the Central Powers, and the German tide threatened to engulf Verdun. Generalissimo Conrad von Hötzendorf of the Austrians had launched an offensive against Italy's flank. He would never get through



it without German help, Hitler thought, but the Teutonic arms will pull Austria out of the rut. Poland was in the hands of the Central Powers, and Rumania was to be punished for her insolence. A great myth had been exploded at the battle of Jutland and now the German navy was resting at Kiel, trying to catch its breath. The time has arrived for the Allies to admit their defeat. This was in the summer of 1916.

The scenes were shifted from Ypres to the Somme where the British began their offensive in July. Adolf Hitler was put on a train and shipped to the new line of defence. He came just in time to attend the opening act of a great spectacle.

On a September morning, after he had snatched a few hours' sleep, he saw a line of tanks for the first time in his life. The iron monsters lurched forward and they gave a screeching sound as they climbed the low hills on top of which the Germans held the section under control. A volley of fire tried to check their advance and then the field-guns came into play. The monsters lurched forward, apparently invulnerable, inflicting untold harm on the Bavarian trenches with their flanking fire and driving fear into the hearts of many a good man. Even the barbed-wire entanglements meant nothing to them. Here were machines to wrest from man the glory of destruction !

Adolf Hitler was now a lance-corporal and a trench runner. He kept up the communication between regimental and company headquarters. This was more hazardous work than lying in the mud and waiting for orders to shout "hurrah." His body was a target, fully exposed, and he now needed all his wits,



One day Hitler had an encounter with a tank which might have been fatal for the National Socialist Party if it had not been for the providential presence of two shell-holes, one carved into the other, which so baffled the machine that it wobbled and rumbled down the hill. Hitler delivered his message into the hands of the regimental commander. That day he reached the conclusion that his fate would be to live.

Even though Lance-Corporal Hitler felt the strength of a host of soldiers in his body, it was not given to a man in his position to turn the tide of war. The Allies had swung themselves across the ruins of Morval and Lesbœufs. The German forces evacuated Combles and step by step withdrew to their last completed line of defence, running across Sailly-Saillisel, Le Transloy and the vicinity of Bapaume, places which left vivid memories in the runner of the Bavarian regiment List.

War had a way of providing new surprises, Hitler thought. Two years before, at Ypres, he had imagined the bottom of the Inferno had been reached. Here, on the Somme, he found that the skirmishes of yesteryear were children's play. On a front of less than twenty miles, thousands of guns were massed for the grand spectacle of the Autumn season. There was a gun for every twenty yards and there was a swarm of men for every shell-hole. "The noisier the merrier," the jester of the company sang in the evening behind the front while the rank and file rested for a new battle. "The noisier the merrier," the chorus repeated, and eyes looked vacantly into the smoke of cheap cigarettes.



A HUMAN CIPHER DEFIES DEATH

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On an October day the British occupied Le Sars, and on that day Adolf Hitler was wounded. Although the wound was not serious, for several months he would be incapacitated and he had to be sent to the rear of the line. The "Sammellazarette" to which Hitler was taken was in no respect less malodorous than most of such hospitals are. The smell of amputated legs and of carbolic acid would have made sick even a healthy man.

A young boy in the corner, his face as smooth as a girl's and his eyes dilated with horror, began to struggle madly when attendants tried to place him on the improvised operating table and he screamed for his mother's help. Another soldier, next to Hitler's bed, sang deliriously "Deutschland, Deutschland über Alles" and only death smoothed his convulsed lips. The front was better than this meeting-place of misery. And then, Hitler wrote in his memoirs, "I heard the voice of a woman, a nurse speaking to my neighbour."

So there was something that could stir him after a long sojourn in hell. The grim young man in a cheap Red Cross car with wooden planks for the wounded looked with uneasy amazement at the towns where the ambulance train stopped. Brussels radiated energy and the hope of ultimate victory. "Our armies are holding the ground," the official bulletin said. They did more than that in the East. It looked as though the Russian giant might be forced on his knees, and then the Pacific Ocean might be the horizon of German dreams.

Liège brought back sweet memories to Lance-Corporal Hitler. He had been mad with joy when the *Neueste Nachrichten* in Munich announced the success of the German



army's onrush in the Belgian kingdom. He remembered how he had feared the war would end before he could show his valour and he smiled with the bloodless grin of the soldier from the trenches.

On his way toward Berlin, his train passed long trains packed with young soldiers, hardly more than children, but no sound of joy came from those rushing trains. Has the youth of Germany forgotten how to sing? Are these boys going to be the heroes of the battles of Ypres and the Somme? Are they the German giants, the descendants of Siegfried and the God Wotan,—genuine Germans whom he, an Austrian, regarded as a superior race?

In Beelitz, near Berlin, he was placed in a hospital and he was thrilled to find a clean bed. Once more he pricked up his ears but this time it was not because of a woman's voice. The voice he heard was that of a tall Pomeranian telling humorous stories which put the ward in a happy frame of mind. Hitler looked at the ceiling. Was it going to fall down on such profanity? Would the door be thrown open to admit the firing squad? The tall Pomeranian was telling stories of self-mutilation, a crime punishable with death. Was it possible that discipline was no longer exacted in Germany, that cowards could boast of their cowardice and be rewarded with a smile?

"Ein frecher Feigling," Hitler muttered, and his neighbour, a wounded soldier from Königsberg, nodded approval. But they two were in the minority, while the others wanted to have more stories. For one back from the front humour is a precious gift, and the tall Pomeranian was funny.

And now to see Berlin as a convalescent, ready for new



impressions ; now to taste its pleasures. Of pleasures there were many, more than a lance-corporal could pay for. The fashionable places were full of able-bodied men, accompanied by brilliantly gowned women. This was a world for the rich and the distinguished. Back in the trenches Hitler had seen the same mud covering all uniforms whether they were of the lieutenant or of the private. He was disgusted with the sight in Berlin. He felt himself inferior. He would never be admitted among these dazzling women, and the men would look down upon him. Did they realize that he had come from the entrails of death and was headed back into it ? He would have liked to harangue the festive crowd on Kurfürstendamm. How he would have told them his opinion. How he would have thundered against the modern Sodom. How he would have liked to flog the half-naked women out of the fashionable Votivkirche. Then he paused to think.

What could he do,—Adolf Hitler, lance-corporal in the Bavarian regiment List ? If he had dared to raise his voice people would have laughed at him or would have reported him to the military authorities as insane. Was it unpatriotic to make life gay for the gallant soldiers on furlough ? Was it not patriotic to have the amusement places open to delight the heroes of many battles ?

The Christmas of 1916 did not encourage gloom. His comrades, back from the front with wounds, did not feel as he did. They liked the lights of Berlin's West End and they were great habitués of the beer-halls of Charlottenburg. This was not a bad Christmas at all. The German armies were in good positions. In distant Transylvania General



Mackensen had chased the Rumanians to the Black Sea as fast as they could run. The Russian Tsar no longer operated his steam-roller and those who were familiar with the real situation knew that he was sitting on a tottering throne.

The "iron train," which carried soldiers on leave, took Hitler back to Munich. Berlin has always had a reputation for being honeycombed with Jews. Munich, he knew, would be different. It was not a parvenu among the German cities. It had old traditions and a native dignity, the product of age and culture. The occasion demanded austerity, and Bavaria would surely live up to her reputation as the most aristocratic State of the Reich, Hitler thought.

But Bavaria did not live up to her reputation, and Munich outdid even Berlin in the consumption of oceans of beer. The Bavarian capital was disconcerting. It paraded high treason in full view of the world. The peasants were rebellious although they had the least reason to complain. The prices of their products were rising prodigiously. Yes, but what good did this do when they had no labourers to till the soil? Their sons were in the army and now word was passed around that the Fatherland would need even the old hands.

When Munich did not gulp down its beer it complained about the never-ending war. The Kaiser came in for his share of criticism. He must have known that this was going to be an endless struggle and he should not have misled the Reich. Bavaria would have thought twice before giving enthusiastic consent to his war measures if she had been told of the real situation. We want peace, Munich said, and Adolf Hitler was disgusted.

Five years after these events Hitler wrote that he was



glad to join his regiment in the Spring of 1917. In saying this he may have played up to the gallery which expected of him a heroic pose, or he may have revealed a sadistic trait in his character. In those days Hitler was too humble to analyse his reactions and probably his boasted gladness to be back in the death line was a pretext to compromise with the inevitable.

He was back in time not to miss the third battle of Ypres and thus to witness the progress of mankind toward the perfection of destruction. In the first three years of the World War humanity furnished evidence of its immense advance in technical sciences, but it was left to the last battle of Ypres to demonstrate the full destructive power of man. The detonation which in the night of June 7, 1917, signalled the start of the battle was heard within a radius of a hundred kilometres. The Allied objective of obliterating the German regiments lying in the first lines of the sector was crowned with success, and the dead bodies of thousands attested the good result of the undertaking. Hitler was not far from the first line when the mine under the German front exploded, but he was unharmed.

When Hitler's regiment was relieved in the first days of August it consisted of a handful of men, their nerves on edge, their faces bespattered with mud, incapable of enjoying the prospect of days of rest in the reserves. Human endurance was reaching the breaking-point. The Allies had gained a small stretch of territory which cost them tens of thousands in men and tens of millions in gold. At that rate Belgium could be cleared of the Germans in half a century. A private from Munich, suspected of socialism, began to rave that all the



statesmen and generals of the world ought to be herded together on the Ypres salient and blown to pieces. The others listened to him gloomily, and even Adolf Hitler did not object.

Hitler says he never faltered during the war in his belief that Germany would emerge as the victor. Although he was not prominent enough to have his words recorded for posterity, his political enemies claim to have found corroboration for their belief that he was subject to moods of pessimism as well as any other soldier in the field. The hinterland, in closer touch with realities, was growing restless and famished. Organized labour challenged the generals to show that the prolongation of the struggle was not the prolongation of the agony. The United States had joined the Allies. "American bluff," the generals said, and went ahead with their plans.

One more desperate effort was made. Labour was conscripted and kept under military rule. Church bells were melted into guns and the copper door latches of the poor were confiscated to help the army. The beginning of the end came, and one after another the fronts held by the Central Powers collapsed.

Near Comines, south of Ypres, almost on the same spot where four years before Hitler began his military career, the English led a gas attack on the night of the 13th of October, 1918. Adolf Hitler was one of the victims. He stumbled across barbed-wire entanglements, trenches and shell-holes with the iron cross dangling from his uniform. He could not see; he was blind. He groped toward the rear and threw himself on the mercy of chance.

Stretcher-bearers picked him up and took him to a field



hospital. He did not know what was going on around him. He wept, but no tears came out of his unseeing eyes. The stench told him that he was among the wounded. His body was bruised all over and he did not know whether or not he was to be placed on the operating table.

He was crowded into a train and soon the rattle of the wheels told him that he was being sent somewhere. He no longer heard the guns but heard the whimpering of his comrades, doomed men or men fearing doom. He inquired in which direction they were travelling and his fellow-patients read to him the names of the stations.

In Pasewalk, a quiet Pomeranian town, the curtain fell on this act of Hitler's life. As he could not read newspapers and could not see what was going on around him he had to rely on second-hand news. The front was crumbling, the army was retreating, army headquarters were of one mind with the civil authorities of the Reich that peace must be concluded with all despatch.

The cobblestones of Pasewalk resounded with the rumble of heavy lorries, and soldiers' shouts pierced its quietude. The sailors from Kiel arrived and spread the news that the navy had hoisted the red flag. Through the closed windows of the hospital a song filtered into the rooms, but it was not Germany's national anthem. The guard no longer stood on the Rhine, and the sailors shouted at the top of their voices that the world will be international. What was going on in the world, Hitler wondered. What did the sailors mean that the past should be eradicated and that the world should rally its forces for a new struggle?

Did it mean that the navy would join the army in an effort



to repulse the enemy? Why were the wards so excited? The blind man could not see his sick companions' faces. They did not sound very depressed, so the situation could not be quite hopeless. Or could it be that they did not care what happened to Germany as long as their lives were safe?

Then one day the chaplain of the hospital called and told the wounded soldiers that the Kaiser had left Germany and that the armistice had been signed.

The Kaiser had left? Did this mean that the Kaiser had fled from his Germans, that he was afraid of his own nation? Did this mean that he was anxious merely for his life and left his country to its own devices?

As to what happened on that day in the hospital of Pasewalk we have only Hitler's own dramatized account. When the chaplain had finished with his story Hitler, according to his version, withdrew from the other soldiers, went back to his cot, buried his face in his cushion and sobbed as he had never sobbed since he lost his mother. Was he striking attitudes when he said years later that on that day he decided to become an agitator and work against those who had wrecked his adopted fatherland? What could a gassed lance-corporal do who might never regain his sight?



CHAPTER III

THE TOWN GOES BOLSHEVIST

IF there had not been so much sunshine in Bavaria in the spring of 1919 Adolf Hitler might be to-day a common labourer in the suburb of Munich. Because of the sunshine people liked to linger in the streets, and once they were in the streets they started revolutions which were responsible for the counter-revolution on the waves of which Hitler rode to fame.

Tattered and famished, the soldiers were streaming back from the fronts, ready to receive the benefits of a new millennium. For years they had suffered unutterable privation in the trenches and now their turn came to be pampered and petted. At every street corner of Munich they were reminded that they were heroes and were entitled to the gratitude of the Fatherland. The question was what form this gratitude should take?

While waiting for the gratification of their most secret dreams, the heroes took long walks between the Karlstor and the Marienplatz. There all the political theories of the day were on public display, passions and perversities were exhibited. In one beer-cellar—because the weary soldier needed refreshment—a young man from the plainland was holding forth against the Prussian monster. His words glowed with the antagonism of the peasant against the factory. Was



Bavaria always to do the bidding of the gentlemen in Berlin? Did not her past and higher culture entitle her to take the lead?

"Look at the Hohenzollerns," another young man shouted. But instead of looking at the Hohenzollerns, people looked into their jugs of beer.

"Zum Wohl," the pretty Bavarian waitress from the highlands said, putting a glass of beer on the table.

"Look at the Hohenzollerns," the young man insisted and a lock of chestnut hair fell into his bloodshot eyes.

The Bavarians never liked the Hohenzollerns. They liked their Wittelsbachs in spite of all their peculiarities. During the empire the Hohenzollerns were an inevitable nuisance, placed at the head of the Reich to lend it unity of purpose. But Bavarians thought that the Hohenzollerns were arrogant and grasping. In less than half a century they had reduced the sovereign German States to the vassals of the Prussian king. The young man was right to make them look at the Hohenzollerns, although they knew that behind all this disagreement between the two ruling houses there lurked a more important difference,—the ineradicable antagonism between Prussia and Bavaria.

"The Prussians have no God," a clerical-looking man said in an unctuous voice, and the peasants from the plainland nodded approval. Bavaria was faithful to Rome, and she could never understand nor forgive Bismarck's high-handed Kulturkampf.

The real activity of world-reforming began in the beer-halls after sunset. The majority Socialists gave preference to the Löwenbräu, while the Independent Socialists remained



true to the Hofbräu. The Communists liked to sip their beer in the Spatenbräu and the Anarchists in the Pschorr. These places each had their contingent of young men trying their hands at saving the world, and of elderly admirers who were shocked and delighted with the audacity of the young. The majority of the audiences, however, were not sure of their own minds and fell into the habit of applauding every speaker. The reactionaries were discredited, and the new millennium was to be free of their kind.

Over jugs of foaming beer conspiracies were hatched and reactionary plots were frustrated. Adherents were gained by direct appeal and a political friend printed on credit one's proclamations to the proletarians of all lands. The proclamations made good reading and the proletariat liked them, as they promised it heaven on earth without delay.

The Löwenbräu resounded with "hoch" shouting when the doyen of republicans stood up to speak. He was Kurt Eisner, a Socialist, warrior of many battles, former editor of the *Vorwärts*, an expert on prisons, which he knew intimately because the courts had disliked his political views. He had many followers, for he was always ready for a political brawl and never at a loss for the solution of a problem. His enemies hated him because he had a Berlin accent and because he was a Jew.

Kurt Eisner stood on the table and his lips curled into a contemptuous smile. He was at his best in routing the foe with his vitriolic wit. When he spoke, Eisner's eyes were pieces of blazing coal. His long hair and beard shook with excitement and he looked like a Biblical prophet rebuking Israel's faithless sons.



In the Hofbräu a young man, unknown to fame as yet, spoke to a smaller audience. He had been a theatrical critic and while it was obvious to anyone merely looking at him that an irrepressible conviction moved his lips, his dramatic gestures betrayed the man of the theatre. He was Ernst Toller, destined to play a rôle in this scene of Bavaria's drama. He had volunteered service in the army at the beginning of the war and now he poured his scorn on imperial Germany which he accused of causing and prolonging the great struggle.

Adolf Hitler had left the hospital in Pasewalk cured but for a nervous twitch of his eyelids. He had survived the war, but how would he survive the peace? If he was lucky he might have a job carrying bricks and mortar. The home-comers were many and jobs were scarce. The uniform was preferable, he thought, to the common labourer's overall and he decided to make use of the privilege offered the floating supply of proletariat to have his meals and cot at the military camp of Traunstein, to stay there until it would be disbanded.

"I strongly urge that the Majority Socialist candidate shall be elected," Hitler is quoted as saying by his political foes. This he was supposed to have said at the election of the soldiers' council, but he never admitted the truth of this allegation. Yet, whatever he said was of no account. He was still a human cipher and even though he had had the wisdom of all the Wise Men of the East his words would have been unheeded.

Kurt Eisner, versed in party work and propaganda, had crystallized the inarticulate dissatisfaction against Prussia, industrial civilization, and military reaction. He was Bavaria's uncrowned king, head of the Council of Workmen, Soldiers



and Peasants, and later Minister President. With the arduous self-infatuation of the political idealist, he felt himself charged to bring the world back to sense and sanity. The Allies were sitting around a long table with a map in front of them, carving territories out of the Central Powers and assigning them to their own associates. The Kaiser had fled, but Germany was to pay the entire bill in territory, money and humiliation.

Kurt Eisner, apostle of the French revolution in Bavaria, enemy of kings and emperors, drew on every ounce of his energy against what he saw as a crime against international equity.

Bare-headed and with his flowing beard he was running from one petty representative of the Allies to another. He had never vociferated against the enemy, never voted for war supplies, and he counted on the recognition of his consistent pacifism. That erstwhile Communist, Premier Clemenceau, would surely let mercy prevail toward Germany because of the virtues of Kurt Eisner ! And President Wilson ! He was an enlightened intellectual himself and in no time Minister President Eisner would feel at home with him. The great problem was, however, to make the Allies deal with guiltless Munich instead of guilty Berlin.

In his eagerness to save Bavaria from Allied wrath, the Minister President began to emphasize Berlin's guilt. Even if the Allies did not acquit Bavaria of being an accomplice to the crime, a penitent sinner could hope for more consideration than an impenitent one. But the Allies were not pacified, whereas the Bavarian reactionaries were enraged. On a February morning of 1919 Kurt Eisner was dead, while a young aristocrat, Count Arco-Vally, with a smoking re-



volvier in his hand, made a wild dash to escape from an infuriated mob.

Who was to step into Eisner's place, who would have the self-assurance of the lost leader? Although the sunshine was bright over Munich, it did not require much sagacity to forecast cloudy skies and storms for the morrow. Whoever took the place of the dead man was sure to be blamed for all the vicissitudes which were to befall the land. A stop-gap Socialist ministry was formed, but it had little authority. The Central Council of Workers and Soldiers, the hope of many at one time, was now the shadow of its former self. Adolf Hitler was back in Munich, still wearing his uniform, and assuming an attitude of watchful waiting. Soldiers in those days knew they wanted something, but did not know what they wanted, and so they were revolutionaries. Hitler, no doubt, did not like Eisner because he had a long beard and because he was a Jew.

Hitler also despised the soldier's spokesmen. The loudest of them was a common sailor, Rudolf Eglehofer, sentenced to death for mutiny by a court-martial just before the end of the war. If the revolution had been one day late, Eglehofer would have been a dead man. But the rebellious soldiers were just in time to save him and there he was now in Munich, boasting of his record as a traitor. Hitler did not like men who had stood in the shadow of the gallows. Besides, he considered himself an aristocrat among his comrades. Even though he was a lance-corporal, that iron cross that he wore with so much self-assurance meant more to him than he could tell.

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On the 6th of April, 1919, the lilac bushes along the River Isar were in bloom and the night was balmy. In the Hofgarten, thrown open to the public, a brass-band played "Orpheus in der Unterwelt."

While young men wove their dreams into patterns with the dreams of young women, great events portending history took place at the meeting of the Central Council of Soldiers and Workers. In an all-night session the Independent Socialists and Anarchists demanded immediate action against the Majority Socialists of Berlin. A few days before, Hungary had gone Communist and Bela Kun established himself as a dictator. Spring had not found great hopes satisfied and if the Central Council in Munich failed to take action what would the world come to? If the Anarchists had been true to their convictions they would have demanded the declaration of anarchy, but they did not know how to organize anarchy. So the next best thing was, the Independent Socialists thought, the proclamation of a Soviet Socialist republic. The Majority Socialists grumbled, and the Communists of the Council were openly antagonistic. They put up a stiff fight against the advocates of the Communist State. It required more than a proclamation, they said, to bring into life a new regime. Their lines of contact with Russia and Hungary were not yet established and they wanted to proceed according to a mutual plan.

But the Bolsheviks were in the minority and the Council declared the Bolshevik republic against the solid Communist vote while the band in the Hofgarten played "Orpheus in der Unterwelt," young men held young women's hands and spoke of eternal love.



Next morning a crimson poster informed Michael Spiessbürger that from then on he owed allegiance, taxes and blood, to the Bavarian Soviet Republic and that he was an ally of the Russian, whom six months before he fought on the eastern front, and of the Hungarian, of whom he knew little more than that he liked gipsy music.

Heavy lorries scurried all over the capital of the Bavarian Soviet Republic, crammed with agitators who were to explain to Michael Spiessbürger what the revolution was good for and why he must be enthusiastic about it. The crimson posters became more eloquent and in accents of profound affection they told the people of Bavaria that they had to love each other as if they were all a happy family. This part of the proclamation made Herr Spiessbürger wonder why there had to be so many troops in the streets and why machine guns had to be mounted at the intersections of the main thoroughfares.

The government of Bavaria, headed by a Majority Socialist, fled to the North, to Bamberg, and made preparations to subject Munich to a state of siege. Berlin took notice of occurrences in the Bavarian capital and began to send troops southward. All depended, however, on the attitude of the peasant. If he was satisfied with the Communist regime, it would be difficult to dislodge the new masters on the Isar bank. But how could the peasant—attached as he was to private property—be content with the Bolshevist system?

Berlin chuckled when it heard that Munich's first thought was to nationalize the universities and the press. This was typical of the intellectuals who had the whip hand in the new cabinet. Next the Bavarian Soviet affirmed the workers'



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right to bread and work. If only this affirmation could have secured bread and work to the 30,000 unemployed in Munich ! The affirmation did not prevent the managers of industrial plants around the Bavarian capital from closing their factories.

Comrade Eglehofer, now supreme military commander of all the armed troops of the Independent Soviet Republic of Bavaria, made his contribution to the stability of the new regime by making the terse declaration, reproduced on posters all over the town :

“Within twelve hours all citizens must deliver their weapons. Those who fail to do so will be shot dead.”

* * * * *

Another warm April day about a week later convinced the Communists of Munich of the folly of being in opposition to a Communist Republic in Bavaria. They were now ready to take matters in their own hands. Their comrades in Moscow and Berlin warned them. Such a revolution must be well prepared if failure was not to be courted. But what did the Russians in their cold Moscow and the comrades in chilly Berlin know about the warm sunshine along the Isar ? Such dazzling weather makes one itch to have power in one's hand even if it is for a fortnight.

Those who had a voice in Munich acquiesced in the Communist project. The legitimate government in Bamberg protested, but it was 150 miles away and its guns could not carry that far. The Communist Manifesto, addressed to the world, was a heroic effort to appear heroic, but it fell flat. It promised the proletariat ultimate victory while the peasants



of the plains put their heads together and decided to withhold their produce from the Soviets. They could afford to do so, since bread was not plentiful in the land and corn was at a premium.

“They are atheists,” the priests thundered in quiet little churches; and the peasants said: “They want to confiscate our land.”

If the sunshine had not been so brilliant over Munich the Communists would have known that they were really not in power. They would have known that Munich and a handful of towns around it could not take up the struggle against a hostile world. They would have heard of the troop movements from the North toward the South and they would have known that the Socialists in Berlin had passed sentence of death on the Communist experiment in Munich.

But the sunshine was brilliant, and the Communists decided to declare the dictatorship of the proletariat. Ernst Toller, overflowing with energy and seized with a sacred fervour to save the world, kept himself in readiness to help. Charles Levine, an atheist by conviction and Jew by birth, occupied the tribune and made a valiant attempt to stay the inescapable fate with a torrent of eloquent words.

But Charles Levine was not strong enough to be a dictator, nor was Ernst Toller. Perhaps the magic of salvation resided in numbers, they speculated, so they set up a Central Executive Committee of 15 members. It set to work and was not successful. Thereupon the number was increased to 30, and when that committee, too, proved a failure, it was reduced to three.

Or, perhaps, the magic might reside in the absence of



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bureaucracy which was the cancer of the old regime. Perhaps if the heads of the Soviet State wrote their orders in longhand the fatherland of the proletariat could be saved. Then there was the mysterious ritual of socializing the banks and industries. That was done, too, and yet no improvement was in sight.

To make things worse, the Bavarian Soviet had a war on its hands in the second half of April. It was a peculiar war carried on by adversaries professing to be pacifists. The head of the legitimate government in Bamberg, Comrade Hoffmann, had a loathing for bloodshed. But being the head of the legitimate government he had to play a legitimist game and that involved open warfare against the Soviets in Munich.

The counter-revolutionary arm consisted mostly of ex-soldiers who welcomed the opportunity to garner new laurels and glory. Adolf Hitler was not among them. He was in Munich, engaged in some mysterious business of which he wanted to say nothing and of which history has no record. The only reference in his reminiscences to his conduct during the Bavarian Bolshevik regime is the dramatic story of how he routed three red villains who had come to capture and, probably, execute him. The three red soldiers, we are told, were heavily armed and yet they fled at the sight of the irate Hitler, brandishing a revolver in his hand and dashing out of the way of danger.

* * * * *

“The Proletarian State is in Danger” a poster announced in scarehead letters to a startled Munich. Armed men were running around in search of an army. The Whites were in



Dachau, barely ten miles out of Munich, almost a suburb. Twenty thousand rifles had been distributed among the proletariat of the Bavarian capital, but how were these men to be made to march against the enemy? Young men thirsty for military honours could become commanders if they were successful in persuading a few men to follow them to Dachau. Small groups hurried up Dachauerstrasse or were arguing with conductors of lorries to give them a ride.

But for a few determined women "the battle of Dachau" would have been a bloody one. The women induced the Whites to withdraw behind a safety zone and the town remained in the hands of the Reds. They were a thousand men strong during the day but by night their number was less, as many of them chose to have their evening meal with their families in Munich. Most of these, however, returned to their posts in the morning.

Ernst Toller was delegated to take charge of the "army" in Dachau. Toller—then not yet the great dramatist he is to-day—accepted the offer, paradoxically enough, because of his pacifist beliefs. As head of the Bolshevik forces on the Dachau front he thought he could prevent bloodshed.

His first official act as commander of military operations was to convoke his soldiers to a meeting on the market place beseeching them to address one another as "brother" and to use the familiar "Du" instead of the formal "Sie" in conversation. The commander was determined to make this a war of brotherly love. He no longer issued orders but gave out instructions and requests. He informed his subordinates that in case of controversy between the commander and his men the Soldiers' Council was to serve as final arbiter.



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Strong in his belief that the war could be liquidated through lovingkindness, Toller despatched moving notes to the foe with the request to retire behind the Danube. But the Whites were not moved by the apparent sincerity of the appeal. They had received reinforcements from the Reich and from Bamberg. According to one estimate the White forces were about a hundred thousand men strong. It was only the question of a few days when they would take the initiative and clean up the Munich mess.

Toward the end of April they closed in on the Bavarian capital which was gradually surrounded by an iron ring. Thereupon the Communists in Munich lost their heads and perpetrated some outrageous acts of vandalism which were subsequently used against them with much force. In the courtyard of the Luitpold Gymnasium they killed ten so-called counter-revolutionary hostages. But for this massacre, the April revolutions of Munich would have been a jovial affair.

As a last measure to save what could no longer be saved, the Communists in Munich proclaimed on the last day of April the dictatorship of the red army. But where was the red army then? It had melted away before the invaders with the exception of a handful of soldiers who threw up barricades in the streets and tried to defend every inch of ground. This was the finale of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Bavaria.

The sun shone brightly when Sharp Shooter Regiment No. 41 marched down Dachauerstrasse toward the centre of the town. In the residential quarters the windows were open and flowers were thrown at the soldiers' feet. But



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the proletariat was grim and sullen. Adolf Hitler, still unknown and a human cipher, stood around and watched the march, wondering what the morrow would portend. He did not know that his hour had come.



CHAPTER IV

SEVEN MEN AT A TABLE

THE gods that had failed in the hour of need were killed or imprisoned and Bavaria clamoured for a new master. The Bolsheviks and Anarchists were fallen angels and their life was hell. This was the time for all good patriots to step forward and claim their place in the sun. The worried-looking young men with shell-rimmed spectacles were cleared out of the halls of the mighty and their places were occupied by a new set. Marx was thrown off his marble pedestal, and once more Nietzsche was in vogue.

Raucous voices in the multitudinous wine cellars no longer rattled forth the tenets of the only way to Communist salvation. This time they thundered forth the citizen's obligations to the Fatherland. New "Vereine" emerged to the surface and at first timorously, later boldly, proclaimed themselves the repositories of truth. Some of these were mystical and they specialized in the darkest recesses of the German soul. Others were metaphysical and they expected Germany's salvation from frequent utterances of profound remarks. Hegel came in for his share of attention and young men with flashing spectacles withdrew into quiet corners, there to discuss the problems of phenomenology in booming voices so that the neighbours might hear.

A Socialist was at the head of Bavaria's government, but



everyone knew he was there on sufferance. Radicalism had been discredited and old-fashioned nationalism was on its way to victory. Retribution was coming slowly but surely and all the world knew it would be heralded by the reign of the army.

Hope was written in the eyes of Adolf Hitler when the barracks of Munich began to fill with young soldiers whose minds he could read. They were his own kind, men in their twenties, human flotsam threatened with being sucked back into everyday life. They did not want to get up with the chickens in order to carry brick and mortar to new structures. When they were in labourers' overalls, it would be soon forgotten that for over four years they had offered their lives to danger.

Hitler did not keep his story about the three red soldiers a secret. Among comrades he liked to dwell at length on his heroism and reached the conclusion that but for his presence of mind he would have ended his life in the courtyard of the Luitpold Gymnasium.

"Hitler is all right," said a comrade who had vainly tried to obtain command of a red detachment and was now a rabid anti-red.

"Hitler is all right," repeated the others who had never known him before. So Hitler was assigned to a committee to investigate the activities of the men of the 2nd Infantry regiment during the revolution.

It was evident that a miraculous transformation had taken place in the barracks of the Bavarian capital. Soldiers who only two months ago could not make up their minds whether they were Communists or merely Socialists began to discover that all forms of radicalism were despicable. Such a



view was encouraged by the military authorities. They saw clearly that in the near future serious work would devolve upon them and they wanted to be ready. They had to be sure, above all, that "Vaterlandsliebe" was inculcated in the men. The penitent sinners, if they showed sufficient zeal in abhorring their former ways, were taken back to the fold. But first a general cleansing process had to be undertaken.

Hitler was one of the soldiers assigned to attend classes of right political thinking. He was entirely in sympathy with the new trend in Bavaria. His innate conservatism had made him see with regret the passing of military Germany. When everyone in Munich wanted to form a political party in order to save the Fatherland, Hitler could not free himself from the obsession. He, too, would have liked to have a group of people of whom he would be the saint. But the experiences of his youth were like a nightmare. He was approaching thirty and he had not yet accomplished anything in life. He had the iron cross, but thousands of others had it. In his day dreams he kept aloof from the crowd, standing on a platform, addressing thousands. No, the dream was too bold,—not thousands, but a few hundreds. And there were beautiful girls in the audience, tall Nordic goddesses, whose eyes were moist with suppressed desire as they looked at their hero. When he had finished speaking they swarmed around him, kissing his lips, calling him their idol.

This was the time for heroes to come forward and crystallize public opinion. Behind barbed wire the German peace delegation was waiting for the terms of the Allies. "Woe to the vanquished" the lords of Versailles said. Seven million



Germans were to be handed over to the enemy. Germany's proud army was to be shattered and the Rhenish provinces occupied. But this was not all. Did Michael Spiessbürger hear aright that Paris and London agreed to make him pay 240 billion marks? That was much more than the entire wealth of the Reich. It was so much that a paper bridge of one mark bills could be built with it to the moon. Michael Spiessbürger had a hearty laugh. The enemy could not have found ten marks in his pockets; how was he going to collect the billions? Then he grew angry and clenched his fists.

"Kurt Eisner and his Jews are to blame for all this," Bavaria lamented, and locked some more Bolshevists and Jews in jail. Kurt Eisner and the Jews were to blame that the Allies were so hard on the Germans. They were to blame that Germany went hungry and that the future looked so bleak. "Kurt Eisner and the Jews"! There was a programme in these words for anyone quick enough to size up their possibilities. But the time had not come yet and the political group that Hitler and his friends planned to form was to be called the Social Revolutionary Party.

The party was dead before it came to life. Its very name was a compromise with the discredited past. The truth was to be found elsewhere. With insatiable appetite Hitler pounced on political meetings. Nationalistic opposition was beginning to become articulate. At a soldiers' meeting a man took issue with the Jew baiters. Hitler answered him with some heat. A few days later he was made political lecturer to Schützenregiment No. 41.

He spoke to soldiers in barrack rooms and made an



impression. An apologetic Austrian with an inferiority complex would have been boring. He had thought his voice was lacking strength, and he was surprised at the way he could convince others. His voice was incisive and his whole manner had a hint of force and self-assurance. His comrades were just as much surprised. They liked to listen to Hitler's rounded sentences uttered with a precision of which they would never have thought him capable. Soldiers from other barracks came to listen to the spellbinder.

Then Hitler was assigned to report about political meetings as an "intelligence officer." Labourers would have called him a spy, but that would have made no difference. The military authorities in Munich wanted to know what was going on in the political underworld. It was none of their business, but they thought that one day, when they would proclaim the dictatorship of the army, such knowledge might be of some use. Adolf Hitler's military bearing and penetrating eyes gained for him the confidence of his officers. He attended the meetings of small political groups, and the information he obtained was useful.

He witnessed the groping of hundreds for self-expression. He pitied the men who racked their brains to produce something that had never been thought before and produced a platitude accompanied by a barrage of hollow words. How hard these men tried to make themselves believe in what they did not believe ! How pathetically eager they were to formulate their programme differently from all other programmes ! And how ineffectual they were ! Hitler would have liked to leap to his feet and harangue the audience in words that had never been heard before.



Hitler's ambitions were moulded by his attendance at the meetings of obscure political parties. The failure of others to show him how right they were made him anxious to show them how right he was. But he had to know first in what he was right. The words came back to him, "Kurt Eisner and the Jews are to blame." The Socialists and the Jews, here were the enemies !

How many times have the Socialists and Jews been denounced in Germany ? There was nothing original in the thought. And there was even less originality in the thought of Nordic supremacy. It must have been a subject of discussion since the first famished Teutonic warrior strayed to the plains of the North. Would it not be a good idea to deny that Germany had ever lost the war and to say that she was stabbed in the back and trampled underfoot by radical criminals ? He glanced at the paper which the postman had just brought and there it was in hysterical headlines, "Stab in the Back." Was there nothing new under the sun ? Could a young man not coin a party slogan no matter how hard he racked his brains ? Prominent men, not human ciphers preached this gospel, and what was a young man unknown to fame to do ?

The yokel from Swabia who brought his wife to Munich to show her the wonders of the cinema knew nothing about these hackneyed thoughts. Or if he knew something about them what was *he* going to do ? Since the prominent men had not fulfilled their duty, there was a place yet for a new Messiah or a new Savonarola.

One day Hitler was assigned to attend the meeting of a small organization, the German Labour Party. It was



advertised as a mass meeting and he found about two dozen people in a small room of the Sterneckerbräu. The audience represented the lowest class of the proletariat who went from tavern to tavern, listening to speeches or looking for a chance to play some rôle in one of the mushroom societies. Pioneers had a prior claim on offices in these societies if the venture succeeded. The investment was small and the stake might become large. The dingy taproom was more inviting than the cheerless home run by nagging wives. It was better to be an oracle in the Sterneckerbräu than to be a husband in one's house.

The two dozen proletarians sat on rough benches and they followed the proceedings with mild interest. Hitler sat down in the last row and was ready for another spectacle of sky-storming ambitions and trivial results.

Herr Harrar, Reichsvorstand, "imperial president," ex-journalist with a weatherbeaten face and black fingernails, was in the chair. A tattered man, introduced as "Herr Professor," perorated about his patent medicine for international ailments. He explained the process of saving Germany. Berlin's crimes cried to heaven because the capital was full of Socialists and Jews. Bavaria must secede from the Reich and must establish God's only Kingdom under the Wittelsbachs. Or if the meeting preferred a President—Herr Professor could not suppress a bashful smile—a man of sense and education would not withhold his consent to the plan. This master stroke would induce Austria to join Bavaria and all would be set for the success of the new Reich.

No sooner had the professor finished than Hitler was on his feet. The suggestion about the Austrian union touched



him to the quick. Why should Bavaria be separated from the rest of the Reich? If Berlin was overrun by Socialists and Jews a man accustomed to facing his enemies should not turn his back on them and barricade himself behind his Nordic superiority. A German refusing to fight for his cause was unworthy of his heritage.

At these words Herr Professor rose, tiptoed to the door, opened it with care, and disappeared in the dark corridor never to be seen again.

The meeting was over, and Hitler left the place, not displeased with the effect of his eloquence. He had almost turned the corner when he saw a man run after him.—He was one of the two dozen who listened to him and to the Herr Professor. He thrust a pamphlet into Hitler's hand with the request that he read it, and then disappeared.

If it had not been for a couple of mice which visited his room every morning Hitler would have forgotten all about the pamphlet. But the mice came punctually when the clock struck five and looked for the piece of sugar which Hitler had placed in the centre of the room the night before. Their gay noise woke him and he watched their eager little movements with amused interest. One morning, however, after the visit of the mice he could not fall asleep; he reached for something to read and laid his hand on the pamphlet which the man had given him. Its title was "My Political Awakening." It was the political programme of the German Labour Party.

A few days later Hitler received a note in longhand that he had been admitted to the German Labour Party and that his acceptance of membership was expected either



in person at the next meeting or in writing. This way of gaining members Hitler found quite amusing and it was more in fun than in earnest that—not knowing what to do with his time—he went to *Das Alte Rosenbad* in the Herrengasse, where the meeting was to be held.

The attendance this time was even less than on the previous occasion. Around a kitchen table, lit by a paraffin lamp, sat four persons, all officers of the German Labour Party. The treasurer read his report which showed that the total assets of the party amounted to 7.50 marks. The three other officers thereupon gave a unanimous vote of confidence to the treasurer and assured him of the unqualified gratitude of the Fatherland.

The imperial president, Herr Harrar, had received three letters from various parts of the Reich, asking for information about the party and soliciting its guidance. The faces of the four men were beaming with pride. This meant to them the nation-wide recognition of their work. A long discussion followed in which they thrashed out the problems about which they were asked as if on their answer had depended the life and death of the German Reich.

The party had no programme beyond that contained in "My Political Awakening," which was the confession of a convert. When Hitler asked for precisions he was answered in abstractions. At any rate the party was anti-Marxist. It represented—or tried to represent—the interests of the working man and it wanted to give him all the good things he had been promised by the Socialists and Communists. The ideas of the leaders about capitalism were conveniently vague. These details, Hitler was told, would be formulated by a



committee on party programme. The main idea of the movement was to make the labourer German-minded. The leaders felt that the native worker had been duped by internationalists. Herr Harrar's hand trembled with excitement when he pictured a future in which millions of German workers were marching toward happiness and prosperity under the banners of the German Labour Party.

Herr Harrar grew enthusiastic only when he could talk about generalities. It was obvious that he scoffed at detail which was, in his view, beyond the notice of great society builders. For a young man of Hitler's type there was only one thing to ensure success, and that was joining the German Labour Party.

Eyes lit up when Hitler finally declared his willingness to become a member of the party. With undisguised glee the treasurer placed the membership book on the table. The tavern-keeper knocked at the door. It was time for the gentlemen to vacate the room. They must know that paraffin was expensive. Besides, he did not like this playing around with societies. The police were getting stricter and only the other day he had an inquiry from police headquarters what the German Labour Party was all about.

Well, the innkeeper would relent if the gentlemen ordered a few glasses of beer, but they must realize that he could not keep the room open indefinitely and, besides, the paraffin . . .

Adolf Hitler did not tell his new associates that he was born an Austrian and not a German citizen. If he had been a German citizen he might not have joined the German Labour Party. Then he would have aimed higher and would have probably got less.



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The imperial president extemporized a brief address in which he spoke of the pride of the Fatherland in such splendid specimens of the German race as Adolf Hitler. He pointed to Hitler's brilliant war record, of which the applicant had informed him a few minutes before, and called on him to follow them to new battles and immortal fame. Then he turned over the membership card to Hitler. Its number was seven.

* * * * *

Adolf Hitler was now the seventh member of the German Labour Party, which later became the German National Socialist Labour Party, whose dictator he became. Without further ado he was appointed head of the committee on propaganda. The committee itself consisted of one member and that, too, was Adolf Hitler. The six other members were also office holders. Every Wednesday the Executive Committee of the Party met, and it discussed affairs of world-wide interest and often settled them. The Executive Committee consisted of the same seven men. Once a week they held a general meeting which was attended by a dozen outsiders. At these meetings their favourite pastime was attacking the local papers in the hope that they would make a counter-attack. But no newspaper took notice of this amateur debating society.

One of the members had an idea which was received with transports of delight. He would send a letter to the editor of one of the leading Munich papers complaining how outraged his feelings were when the night before at a meeting of the German Labour Party one of the speakers had slandered and maligned the paper, and saying that he



hoped action would be taken to prevent such disgrace. With bated breath the conspirators, and first of all, the director of propaganda, awaited the result. They all hoped there would be country-wide scandal. It was almost *lèse-majesté* to pass disparaging remarks about a great daily. The police might step in, and they might even be tried if good fortune favoured them. The result was, indeed, catastrophic,—it was devastating. The newspaper continued to treat the matter with contemptuous silence.

Then Hitler had the idea that if they could not reach the masses through the printed word they could catch their ear through the spoken word. They would have a mass meeting at which they might even have fifty people in attendance. Yes, but how were they going to tell the people about the mass meeting? Of course, invitations must be sent out. But how and on what? After much deliberation it was decided that the members would take turns at writing the invitations in longhand and distributing them. A friendly stationer gave them paper on credit.

Hitler wrote eighty invitations and delivered them in person. This was his test as propaganda chief and he was nervous when the hour of the meeting approached. To compose himself he took a long walk along the Isar. Punctually at the appointed hour he entered the meeting room. The attendance was four persons and when the chairman opened the meeting an hour late there were seven persons in the room.

Undaunted, they sent out hand-written invitations and saw their efforts rewarded when eleven persons attended the next meeting instead of the traditional seven. Slowly the



number rose until it reached thirty-four. Then the chief of propaganda heaved a sigh of relief. The way was now open for a crowd of a hundred. They raised some money and advertised the next meeting in the *Münchener Beobachter*. The result was startling. When Herr Harrar opened the meeting 130 persons packed the place.

But instead of being happy Herr Harrar was worried. Adolf Hitler was on the speakers' list. Would the chief of propaganda cut a figure before such a large crowd? He suggested gently that if Hitler did not wish to speak that night he would be excused. But Hitler did not take the hint. He had twenty minutes to speak and the audience clamoured for more when he wanted to stop.

By the autumn of 1919 the party had outgrown the small beer-halls. After the Eberlbräukeller they rented the Deutsches Reich in the Dachauerstrasse. Their regular attendance was now 200 and the excess of assets over liabilities the equivalent of a sovereign. People began to come for Hitler's sake. He was the *prima donna* of the piece.

It did not require much ability to be the chief attraction of a show produced by Papa Harrar. The ex-journalist could speak with authority to half a dozen people, but he was uneasy under the glare of two hundred. While he put up a brave show not to appear nervous, the way he dried his spectacles every other second betrayed his timidity. The outside attractions Papa Harrar advertised were would-be scholars and scientists whose only connection with their selected subjects was a collection of high-sounding phrases.

On the platform Hitler was a different man. As if all his awkwardness had been ironed out of him, he appeared



straight, sure of himself, domineering. He stood at attention, not the lance-corporal awaiting orders, but the captain making his dispositions. His muscles were tense, his brain was set in working order. His face was lit up with a sickly smile, such as one sees on the old prints of tyrants. It was a smile that commanded silence and that might at any moment turn into withering contempt.

He began to speak in a slow staccato voice which sounded like a machine gun. To the audience—former soldiers—the voice was familiar, it was the voice of authority. And those penetrating eyes and the outstretched index finger bore down upon the audience and forced themselves on its attention. The man on the platform liked to speak and he spoke well. He believed he had a mission and he knew how to speak about it to others.

If Hitler had relied on his powers of persuasion he could have gone on preaching to 200 political dissidents. But he wished to make the party grow. To achieve success, he had to pattern his movement on a successful precedent. Then he had to formulate his thoughts and, finally, bring his concoction to the world's attention.

Shortly after the termination of the war, Hitler witnessed a Socialist procession of about 120,000 organized labourers in the Lustgarten of Berlin. The entire park was full of them and they overflowed into the adjoining streets. Singing their revolutionary songs under red banners they marched past him, an orderly crowd animated by the same idea. Although disliking the Socialists by instinct, Hitler could not help being impressed. It was a successful movement of world-wide importance. How had it spread that far?



GOTTFRIED FEDER

*Courtesy of European Picture Service, New York
(European Syndicating Prohibited)*



Then there was Catholicism, which for centuries has held its devotees under its rule. Being a Catholic, Hitler knew something of the patient, detailed work with which the Church took an interest in the lives of the faithful. Here were two movements, one political and the other religious, which sank their roots deep into the lives of the individual. Both of them had transformed man's civilization.

With great deliberation and consciousness of purpose, Hitler proceeded to apply the lessons of Marxism and the Church to his problem. Even though he had not yet found his way into the newspaper columns he thought he knew the ingredients with which synthetic public opinion could be compounded. He had to be careful to eliminate elements which would neutralize one another and he had to be even more careful to use elements whose presence could be easily explained to the "Masse Mensch."

At one of the "mass meetings" of the German Labour Party, attended by a dozen proletarians, Hitler was captivated by the address of Gottfried Feder, a glib young man, half charlatan and half scholar, with a way of dressing up nonsense like common-sense. Herr Feder explained to his audience a subtle distinction between two sorts of capital. Every member of the audience understood him because the explanation, offered with all the display of scientific demonstration, was so absurd that the most vacant-looking proletarian could see it was true.

Herr Feder's great discovery was the distinction between two kinds of capital : one of them was the loan capital, which people with money and no work on their hands farm out to others against consideration, called interest. The other



One was the industrial capital, which feeds the arteries of industry.

This was a marvellous idea, Hitler thought. Loan capital was Jewish and industrial capital was Christian. Hence loan capital could be expropriated and distributed among the proletariat. Industrial capital, on the other hand, would not be touched. Against this arrangement the Christian capitalists would have no objections. They would like it because a movement sponsoring such a programme would draw on the life force of their worst enemies, socialism and communism. This was a lucky stroke, indeed, and Hitler rubbed his hands with glee.

The implications of this discovery were tremendous. First of all Hitler would keep step with the spirit of the age which demanded consideration for the working man. He would organize an Aryan heaven on earth, and the Jew would foot the bill. Marxian socialism would become a back number, forsaken even by its zealots, except, of course, by the Jew. With this idea in his possession he would not have to worry about the finances of his party. Sensible capitalists would see that this kind of socialism was their best friend and they would not hesitate to help it on its way.

Hitler appropriated Feder's idea and made him his tutor and aide-de-camp. This theory fitted in remarkably well with his view of the masses. The masses are vain, Hitler preached to his collaborators, and they must be pandered to. This new socialism of theirs, to which he began to refer now as national socialism, was the very thing that the herd would like. Since it was based on the superiority of the Aryan it would make the filthiest swineherd a nobleman. The



nobility would be conferred on more than sixty million Germans, but excluded from the pure-blood class would be the half-million Jews living in the Reich. Hitler began to rehearse the new slogan :

“All cultural values, artistic, scientific and technical, have been produced by Aryans.”

Now that Hitler had his programme—or at least the nucleus of it—he had to find a way of bringing it to the attention of workers and employers. The Press would have been a good medium, but that was not open to the chiefs of propaganda of obscure political societies. Hitler then decided that better than newspapers and books was the spoken word. The proletariat has no time and patience to read, and even if it reads it forgets what it was all about. The truth must be taken to the meeting rooms and there dinned into the ear of the victim until he knows it by heart and greets it as an old acquaintance. How was the dinning to be done ?

“The receptivity of the masses is limited,” Hitler wrote, “their intelligence is small and their forgetfulness is great.” Effective propaganda must therefore be confined to a few issues which can be easily assimilated. The subjects must be presented to the masses in the language of the least educated so that everyone should understand the point.

“Patience is the key to success,” Hitler declared with an air of profundity. “The masses are slow, need a long time to make themselves familiar with a point and have to be told the same thing a thousand times. . . . And then one learns with amazement the tremendous, almost inconceivable result of perseverance.”

The erstwhile carpenter's assistant knew too much about



his own kind to cherish illusions about their intelligence. He minced no words in declaring that impartiality is weakness and never leads to success. What the leader needs is a "ruthless and fanatically one-sided presentation of the case." In other words, fanaticism is the friend of the propagandist, and even knowledge must play second fiddle to emotion.

"Hatred is more durable than antipathy and the generating power of great changes is not so much insight as hysteria."

Hysteria was, therefore, the keynote. The rabble to which the New Master was to preach the New Creed could not understand the soft-spoken intellectual, but could be spell-bound by the hysterical agitator. Down with democracy! And so Hitler reached the conclusion that "democracy is fundamentally Jewish, not Germanic."

The religion of hatred was taking shape. It was not sufficient to hate one's enemies, it was inevitable to inspire the enemy to hatred.

"If you fail to see your name maligned in the Jewish press in the morning," Hitler wrote, "you made no good use of your time yesterday."

Now that the main principles of action were laid down the problem was how to make oneself hated. Hitler was clever in generating hate in others. One of his devices was to have the name of the organization changed to German National Socialist Labour Party. That infuriated the Socialists, who maintained they had a vested right in the word "Socialist." Then Hitler had the notices of National Socialist meetings printed on red paper. Red was considered by common consent the trade-mark of the radicals.



The strategy worked. The Socialists took notice and began to pay attention to the National Socialist meetings. Their reaction was splendid. It was to be hoped that at one of the meetings there would be an encounter between the Socialists and the National Socialists. The taprooms of the taverns could no longer hold the audience keyed up to lively doings. The number of friends and foes attending the meetings rose phenomenally. A year after the assassination of Kurt Eisner, in February 1920, the vast Hofbräuhausaal am Platzl was jammed with 2,000 people. Half of them were presumably Communists who had come to disrupt the meeting. If they came they were welcome, as in those days Hitler did not like to speak only to people who were of his mind. Opposition kept him in good fighting trim.

This was expected to be a particularly entertaining affair. As long as the party was small the opposition took no notice of it, but now that it was growing by leaps and bounds measures had to be taken to stop its growth.

The first speaker was a pot-boiler, put on the platform so that the "publikum" could see the difference. Hitler was received with cat-calls. Undisturbed, he began to speak. This was an important occasion, so he set forth the main points of the party programme. He talked about the conspiracy of capital to throttle the Christians. Then he talked about the conspiracy of labour to thwart Christians. The Jews were behind capitalism and Marxian socialism. The proletarians had to be nationalized. He attacked the loan capital, the stock exchanges, and the big shops. A Communist could not possibly get excited when someone assailed the stock exchanges and the big shops, although it was clear



to him that the man on the platform had stolen his thunder and was using it against him.

Hitler spoke for hours with the same intensity. The subject of big shops is not unusually exciting and yet people had to listen to him with undivided attention. His eyes and his authoritative voice kept a thousand opponents in place.

Then a heckler's voice perforated the veil of silence and there was a lively exchange of repartees. But such disturbances were infrequent. The police commissioner of Munich was Herr Ernst Pöhner, destined to play a rôle in Hitler's life. While he was committed to impartiality, Herr Pöhner knew the ways of interpreting his obligations to suit his own taste. He did not like the Marxians and liked the National Socialists. From friends, people in high standing, he had heard of the strange young man, Adolf Hitler, holding thousands under his spell with a choice selection of nonsense. But Herr Pöhner had his own opinion on the subject. One night he visited the National Socialist meeting incognito, and he was willing to subscribe to every word he heard there. From then on there was always a detachment of policemen on hand to prevent the radicals from making disturbance.

"Ein Besessener," the Socialist *Münchener Post* wrote, "a madman, pay no attention to him." But Hitler put up a good show and he drew large crowds. His innovation worked. Up to this time, it had been an unwritten law even among the Socialists not to make any special effort to be understood by all. But Hitler, true to his promise, spoke down to the last servant-maid in his audience. For the illustration of his points he used homespun similes and



Michael Spiessbürger was proud that not one word escaped his understanding.

Concurrently with the growth of the National Socialist audiences, the party organization showed important gains. A small room in Sterneckerbräu im Thal was their first party headquarters, which might have done for a dungeon better than for a party bureau, so small and dark was it. It was an event when at Hitler's suggestion it was decided to introduce electricity into the room. The next step was the purchase of a second-hand typewriter which had many admirers among the party members.

It took eighteen months before the party outgrew the room, and then it rented more decent quarters in the Corneliusstrasse. It had three rooms, electricity "and everything," as Hitler proudly announced to the party chiefs.

The new creed had to have its hierarchy and sacred insignia. A student of human weaknesses, Hitler knew that much could be achieved by putting one man over another, thus inciting jealousy and stirring ambition. With the help of his associates he founded local groups around Munich and in the larger cities of Bavaria. These groups were placed under leaders, who were laws unto themselves, responsible only to the party chieftains in Munich. Order was maintained at the meetings through "Ordngruppen," the pick of young partisans who were greatly honoured by this attention.

The early Christians knew what they were doing when they selected the cross as the emblem of their religion. Hitler followed in their footsteps when he turned his attention to the question of a party emblem. He had some historical



precedent in the selection of the swastika, regarded by German anti-Semites as the symbol of thoroughbred Aryanism. It was the emblem of the newly won nobility of sixty million "Masse Menschen."

As a former soldier, Adolf Hitler knew that the new movement would need a flag. The way he devised the flag showed his capacity for the production of synthetic enthusiasm. It was not a flag evolved by a spontaneous desire or by necessity. It was a cold-blooded attempt to give visual interpretation to a so-called spiritual movement. The result of Hitler's labours to give his followers a flag is significant. It is a red flag with a large white circle containing the swastika. The red is a bait and a challenge. It invites the proletariat to feel at home in the Nationalist camp, and it challenges the Socialist's claim to a monopoly of red. The white brings back memories of the Bourbon restoration in France, when reform was dethroned and reaction was sanctified. It illustrates the counter-revolutionary nature of the movement. Finally, the swastika is meant to serve as the symbol of racial purity.

The success of the National Socialist Party under its propaganda chief was so phenomenal that the leaders had a problem to find a hall large enough to hold the audience. Munich gaped in amazement when 5,000 sympathizers and opponents filled the vast Bürgerbräufestsaal toward the end of 1920. Obviously, the Bavarian capital was anxious to show the hated Berlin how to spur a political movement to destinies undreamt of before. Since Socialists were in the saddle in Prussia, Bavaria would give a helping hand to those who wanted to dislodge them from their privileged position.



SEVEN MEN AT A TABLE

CSL

In August, 1921, a palace revolution broke out in the National Socialist Party. It was an anomaly that men who were only good enough to be leaders of an organization of six members should continue to be in charge of a movement which could fill the Zirkus Krone, the Olympia of Bavaria. The former propaganda chief, Adolf Hitler, was made first vice-president of the party and dictatorial powers were placed in his hands. The first six members of the German Labour Party vanished from the surface, while member No. 7 was consecrated as its High Priest.



CHAPTER V

THE MAN IN THE RAINCOAT

JOHANN RAMERSDORFER, a leading member of the Socialist Party in a suburb of Munich, Schwabing, having obtained his wife's permission to convert their family fortune into foreign currency, took the 3,000,000,000 marks they had to the nearest bank and had it exchanged for one dollar. When he was not home by eight o'clock in the evening of that pleasant October day in 1923, Frau Ramersdorfer, anticipating the worst, betook herself to the *Grüner Vogel*, where in those times many husbands with millions could be found.

But Johann Ramersdorfer was not at any table of the "Green Bird" nor was he under the table. Having informed the police, Frau Ramersdorfer was notified a few days later that her husband was a prisoner of war in Coburg. Frau Ramersdorfer was flabbergasted. Everyone knows that Coburg is in Bavaria, and how could Bavaria carry on war against Bavaria? Could the police help? No, the police could not help beyond indicating that in these days the queerest things were apt to befall members in good standing of the Socialist Party of Schwabing.

In the Autumn of 1923 Coburg was the headquarters of an invisible army. The army was invisible, however, only to the authorities; not to the tourists who took



the trouble to visit that pleasant town in the north of Bavaria.

The two adjacent States, Thuringia and Saxony, German in blood and language, had gone foreign in their political views. Bolsheviks and extreme Socialists were in power, hence the military display on the frontier. Hitler's National Socialist young men preferred to pound the pavement of Coburg under a barrage of admiring glances from blushing maidens to returning to the classrooms.

Captain Ehrhardt's freebooters were there, as they were everywhere where there was trouble. The Captain himself, out of jail only a short time, travelled about with the forged passport he had received from the Munich police. Captain Röhm, a dare-devil and a dandy, commanded his "Reichskriegsflagge," composed of men still bewailing the end of the war. Then there was the Young German Order of young men, hopeful that another war might come.

The sinews of war are money and so the invisible army kidnapped political opponents suspected of having money. Thus Johann Ramersdorfer's one dollar wandered into the war chest of the invisible army and he was put to work on the roads. There Johann Ramersdorfer drops out of our story, never to return to it again.

Bavaria was in an uproar against the entire world, although the opposition was mainly directed against her next-door neighbour. One night the citizens of Stockheim, behind the Bavarian border, in alliance with the Coburg soldiers, raided Ostheim, a village behind the Thuringian frontier. The Stockheimers were reactionaries and their watchword was: "Long live the King." Some of the Ostheimers were



Communists and their slogan was : " Long live the Soviet Republic." Underneath all, however, there was a professional jealousy because both Ostheim and Stockheim produced pigs and their products were in competition on the market.

" In a drop of water the universe is mirrored." Stockheim and Ostheim reflected the sad fate of Germany. French soldiers were in the Ruhr because the Germans had not sent the French a sufficient number of telegraph poles. The Germans stopped the factories and railways, and the roar of the Ruhr became a quiet buzz, interrupted occasionally by the burst of rifles which put an end to the lives of over-patriotic Germans. Quai d'Orsay was boxing the ears of Wilhelmstrasse, and the latter, too weak or too proud to fight, stuck out its tongue and made angry faces.

Meanwhile an avalanche of bank-notes appeared on the market and the German currency glided to abysmal depths. The printing presses of Berlin, in an effort to finance the resistance in the Ruhr, declared war on reason, and the governmental coalition, headed by Gustav Stresemann, the Chancellor, had to be the referee.

While Berlin tried to settle its affair with Paris, Munich, still resentful about the stab in the back in 1918, began to practise stabbing on Berlin's back. Bavaria had a grievance : she had been dishonoured by the reactionaries. But how could that be done while Berlin kept her under surveillance ? Besides, although Bavaria knew she did not want the things she had, she could not make up her mind about any of the desirable things she coveted. Should she accept the suit of loquacious Wilhelm, chopping logs in Holland, or should



she encourage the advances of Rupprecht, scion of the Wittelsbachs ?

In the Autumn of 1923, Bavaria had not only an invisible army on her northern border, she had also an invisible revolution. Munich no longer took orders from Berlin. Chancellor Stresemann might talk himself hoarse, Bavaria would not listen to his wail. "Let us march on Berlin," the Bavarian patriotic organizations shouted, and the government said neither yes nor no. Tourists from Berlin were stopped at the Bavarian frontier and were sent about their business with the warning that the "Sauwirtschaft" with the Sozis and Jews in Prussia must be ended. Bavaria outjunkered what once had been sabre-rattling Prussia.

To Bavaria the reactionaries of all countries flocked. Adolf Hitler, a man of importance now, was all over the place. From his vantage point in Munich he had to fight the entire world. No doubt, he was now the greatest attraction in the Bavarian capital and people came from afar to sit at his feet. Children in the streets pointed at him and grown-ups hailed him, "Heil Hitler." He had no end of conferences at which he liked to lower his voice to a mysterious whisper.

Munich resounded with the strong words of strong men. General Ludendorff, a Prussian Junker if ever there was one, took refuge in the reactionary haven. He was still dazed by his fall from supreme power. "Germany *has* won the war," he shouted, "but has been prevented from having her claim verified by a conspiracy of Socialists, Jews, Catholics, and Freemasons." With Bavaria backing him he claimed he could clean the French out of the Ruhr and the Rhineland, and



the Bolsheviks out of Russia. But first the march on Berlin must be made and traitors' heads must fall !

The former generalissimo shook hands with the lance-corporal and fell to talking about the affairs of the State. Ludendorff sat erect, a German Buddha. His cheeks were reddening with the suppressed effort to keep in leash his impetuous violence. The tips of his moustache trembled with excitement. He was fantastic and chanted rhapsodies of hatred.

Hitler managed to be cool. Only the unnatural trembling of his eyelashes betrayed the struggle in him of the impulse to fall on his knees in the presence of the idol and of his strong determination to assert himself even against Ludendorff.

Side by side they reviewed reaction's invisible army on the Bavarian front, and their grim features relaxed when the young men shouted of one accord : " Down with Berlin . . . Down with President Ebert."

President Ebert, Socialist and patriot, saw an impending putsch in Bavaria and tried to stave off its advent. The Reichswehr was vested with extraordinary powers. This was a leap in the dark. Who knew how the Reichswehr felt toward the republic? It was officered by monarchists and they might throw their authority on the side of the enemy. Bavaria countered with emergency measures. The government of Herr von Killing in Munich appointed Dr. Gustav von Kahr General State Commissary with dictatorial powers.

Dr. Kahr was an enemy of the republic and in his inaugural address he described himself as a faithful servant of the Wittelsbachs. A descendant of a long line of " Beamter," Herr von Kahr was a typical example of a Bavarian State



official. Heaven had not endowed him with any special ability except making himself agreeable where a good record was useful. "A colourless man," his political friends said, while his enemies called him a coward. With his flabby face, high collar, bow-tie and black suit, he was the typical man-in-the-government. His imagination was nil; his shrewdness was enormous. His intelligence was modest; his vanity extraordinary. He was successful, his opponents said, because he had known how to hide his incompetence behind a display of irritating mannerisms. With all his extravagance and nervousness he might have been a genius. He rose constantly because he would not take "No" for an answer. Bavaria's invisible revolution needed a man like Gustav von Kahr.

With a voice that was whining and uncertain, Herr von Kahr gave orders which meant a putsch and open revolution. The Bavarian railways were no longer to obey Berlin. General von Lossow, a monarchist and a junker, was made commander of the Reichswehr forces in Bavaria. Von Lossow made his troops take the oath to the Bavarian State. No word was said about allegiance to the republic, but it was evident the Reichswehr's loyalty in Bavaria was due to Crown Prince Rupprecht. General Hans von Seeckt, hero of Gorlice and chief of the Republican Army, was sending orders to his subordinate in Munich which von Lossow acknowledged with customary politeness and ignored. The road to Berlin was open. This was no longer an invisible revolution but an open revolt.

Adolf Hitler's work had increased immensely. He addressed mass meetings in half a dozen Bavarian cities.



In Augsburg he was as popular as in Passau ; in Landshut he was as much an idol as in Erlangen. Fame gave his words wings and his actions a nervous energy. To-day he gave Captain Migliorati, the black-shirt envoy, the Fascist salute and asked about the health of Il Duce. To-morrow he would receive disciples from Czechoslovakia or Rumania and would sit in solemn conclave with representatives of Austria and Hungary. The wise men of the East had come to prostrate themselves at the feet of the new Messiah. A disciple compared his service to that of Christ ; Hitler smiled modestly and was very proud of himself.

The eyes of the reactionaries of all countries were riveted on the man of Braunau. The Premier of Bulgaria assured him of his deep sympathy and veneration. Finnish militarists suggested to him the formation of an anti-Soviet bloc. Swedish big-army men offered him their aid. Grand Duke Cyril, self-styled Tsar of All the Russias, sent to him General Bisupsky, a slick diplomat with a weatherbeaten profile, as an *officier-de-liaison*. A mysterious "Herr Konsul," formerly of Petrograd and now of Zurich, maintained contact with Switzerland. Even the United States, groaning under the heels of Jewish Wall Street, made an effort to rise to the blond man's estate. A clan of hooded men in nightshirts paraded in the dark meadows, burnt crosses, and made itself a nuisance in many other ways. There were signs of a dawn on the American horizon so that Hitler might perhaps revise his firm opinion of the *soi-disant* greatness of a country which, as he said deprecatingly to a French journalist, "the Jews and idiots had made the arbiter of the world."

By the beginning of November food riots had broken



out in various parts of the Reich. The Winter threatened to be tragic for the Reich. The Black Reichswehr, a terroristic organization, had not yet buried all its dead and chaos was rampant in Germany. Major Kühne counselled a children's crusade against the desecrators of the holy shrines of nationalism. Dr. Friedrich Weber avouched that his stalwarts of the "Oberland" could wait no longer. Dictator von Kahr took the decisive step and stopped the Reichsbank's gold from being taken out of Nuremberg. General von Lossow was not averse to immediate action, and Colonel Seisser, chief of the Bavarian State police, was willing to follow where Lossow and Kahr were going. The 9th of November was the fifth anniversary of the "stab in the back," the end of the war of which Germany should have been the victor. Although the population had been disarmed after the Bolshevik revolution, about two hundred thousand rifles had not been withdrawn from circulation among the patriotic population of Bavaria.

* * * * *

"At 8.30 in the evening of November 8th the new government will be proclaimed," declared Adolf Hitler on November 6th. On the fifth anniversary of Germany's shame the Reich was to be revenged.

At 8.34 in the evening of November 8th the new government was proclaimed. The Bürgerbräukeller was packed with thousands of members of the Bavarian patriotic societies. Herr von Kahr was on the platform and with a strong Bavarian accent began to read his address on "The People and the Nation." It was a good address, written by the chief



editor of the *Münchener Zeitung*, Herr von Kahr's well-known "ghost." The audience in the rear of the hall cupped its hands to its ears to hear every word. Herr von Kahr was popular with the masses, first, because he spoke with a Bavarian accent, and, second, because he had used his dictatorial power to reduce the price of beer.

Hitler had decided that the mass meeting in the Bürgerbräukeller should be the prelude to the putsch, but he had not informed the dictator, nor the commander of the Reichswehr, nor the chief of police of his plan. He was satisfied that they would side with the conspirators if they were faced with an accomplished fact.

Up the steep Rosenheimerstrasse, panting trucks carried the Hitlerites. There was a large crowd around the hall and a sprinkling of police. Hitler had the crowd pushed back and the police disarmed. Flanked by two bodyguards he entered the hall and shot his pistol at the ceiling. Kahr paled. He was completely mystified.

"Will Their Excellencies step into this room," Hitler invited the dictator and the commander of the Bavarian Reichswehr, pointing with his pistol at an open door. Then he spotted Colonel von Seisser, the chief of police, and made him join Their Excellencies in the adjoining room.

A "Proclamation to All Germans" was ready, waiting for distribution. It was signed in the name of the provisional National Government by General Ludendorff, Adolf Hitler, General von Lossow, and Colonel von Seisser. None of them knew anything about it except Adolf Hitler. At the point of a pistol, Kahr, Lossow and Seisser were to give their endorsement of the new national regime of which they were



the leaders. Kahr was cast for the rôle of Regent Governor of Bavaria. General Ludendorff was to be Regent Governor of the entire Reich, and Hitler the Chancellor—both vested with dictatorial powers.

"I must beg the pardon of Your Excellencies and of Colonel Seisser . . ." Hitler had always been punctilious about titles and he had a weakness for saying "Excellency."

There were tears in Hitler's eyes when he sought to convince the three gentlemen that this was the psychological moment to accept the posts offered to them. Then he suggested having his decision verified by the crowd in the hall. After addressing the audience he came back to report that the Bürgerbraükeller endorsed his choice with delirious delight. Everything was all right; the world might be informed of Germany's new national government.

Meanwhile a grey car roared at high speed on the road from Wilhelmshöhe to Munich. It halted in front of the beer hall and out of it jumped General Ludendorff.

"Everyone must do one's duty," Hitler perorated. ✓

"Right," commented Seisser, "but you've broken your promise. You were not to stage putsches now."

"Yes, but I have broken my promise in the interest of the Fatherland." Then, playing with his pistol, Hitler continued :

"I have four shots here, three for you if you desert me and one for myself."

"You can kill me if you like," Kahr said, just to say something.

Then, the official version of the conversation, published by the Hoffmann Press Agency, quotes Hitler as saying :

"Let me have a jug of beer."



Ludendorff entered, unacquainted as yet with the object of the call :

“Gott und Vaterland,” and he thought of his march on Berlin, Moscow, and Paris.

General von Lossow seemed small in the presence of the war lord. Colonel von Seisser kicked back a chair that was not in its proper place.

“And the Wittelsbachs?” Herr von Kahr inquired. “If I am to accept a position in the new government it will be in their name.”

“They were all deeply moved,” Hitler stated to the court five months later. “There were tears in the eyes of Lossow and Seisser.”

This was a crying revolution. All four men shook hands and looked firmly into one another’s eyes. Hitler, with tears in his eyes, sat down to draw up a manifesto.

“The government of November criminals is removed,” he read to the public of the Bürgerbräu. Since Ludendorff was coming along so nicely, Hitler changed his original disposition, reduced the general to the rank of a Minister of War, and on the spur of the moment appointed himself dictator of the Reich.

“I suggest,” he read to the audience which was consuming immense quantities of beer, “that I be entrusted with the conduct of the policies of the provisional government of the Reich.”

The inebriated patriots shouted hurrah. Now that they had given Hitler the authorization to be the dictator of Germany he grinned broadly and bowed in all directions. His voice rang clearly in the general din :



"To-morrow finds either a national government in Germany or us dead."

The patriots rose, waved their handkerchiefs and sang the national anthem.

"To the *Münchener Post*," shouted several of them. Singing and chatting they marched to the Socialist paper, flung bricks against its windows, went home, and fell asleep.

Meanwhile the National Socialist shock troops in Ingolstadt began their march on Berlin under the leadership of Oberinspektor Kuffler. The Landshut contingent started on its way at midnight, commanded by Gregor Strasser, the chemist. Orders by other shock troop leaders were not to be opened before 8.30 and the march, insufficiently prepared, had to be begun late at night.

When the bells of the Frauenkirche struck midnight all was quiet in Munich, except Adolf Hitler, and a few of his stalwarts. They drove to the railway station, but it was occupied by the police. The Central Telegraph Office was likewise.

"The Chief of Police is on the job," Hitler must have thought and turned his attention elsewhere. To-morrow would be a hard day. He would have to make several speeches before they could begin the march on Berlin.

Herr von Kahr was not asleep at midnight as was his wont and from this anyone might have concluded that strange things were about to happen in the State of Bavaria. The dictator was closeted with Herr Matt, the Minister of Education, clean-shaven and sedate, faithful son of the Church and of his party. A few minutes later they were climbing up



the stairs of the residence of Archbishop Faulhaber, soft-spoken diplomat and monarchist.

A few minutes more elapsed before the royal villa in Berchtesgaden was on the telephone. Herr von Kahr was calling Rupprecht of the House of Wittelsbach, Crown Prince before, but King now by the grace of Hitler. We shall know more about the history of the night upon hearing Herr Kahr address the royal man. If he says "His Majesty" the march to-morrow may begin.

"His Highness," Herr Kahr addressed his master. From the other end of the wire came some sharp words.

Crown Prince Rupprecht had never liked Ludendorff, the insolent commoner, who put himself above princes of royal blood, and His Eminence, the Archbishop of Munich-Freising, knew that Rome looked at the German republic with much sympathy.

In less than two hours, while Munich was fast asleep, the radio station of the Bavarian capital called Germany and the world. Dr. Gustav von Kahr, General von Lossow, and Colonel Seisser denied their participation in the Hitler putsch. Their consent, they said, had been obtained at the point of the pistol.

At the same time posters were pasted on the walls. "The power is in the hands of the new national government," Hitler wrote. "Ludendorff, Kahr, Lossow and Seisser are with us."

When the morning came the new national government had only the Bürgerbraukeller and the Army District Headquarters in its hand. Three of the heads of the new movement joined the enemy camp. Adolf Hitler, his face per-



spiring with exertion, made speeches and waited for Munich to sweep the opposition out of his way. He wore a grey raincoat, his trousers were bespattered by mud and his lips twitched nervously. Ludendorff leaned on a table with both elbows, thought of Berlin, Paris and Moscow, and was taciturn. He wore a civilian dress and a green felt hat with a pheasant feather, the kind country squires wear.

The bridges and public buildings were occupied by the regular army. Against this show of force Hitler and Ludendorff decided to let the street speak. Could there be a more invincible alliance than that of the war idol and the tribune? The apostles of violence wanted a peaceful demonstration, the result of which should be appraised by the loudness of the cheers.

"No German blood will be shed," Captain Röhm, leader of the Reichskriegsflagge, declared. This was to be a Gandhi day in Munich, at the end of which the march on Berlin would begin.

The National Socialist shock troops were reported on the outskirts of the city, weary and sleepy from the all-night march and ride. Other troops had not yet arrived, as they received their orders too late.

"There *will* be bloodshed," Colonel Leupold retorted. "The Reichswehr will shoot at us."

"We march," General Ludendorff answered without looking up from his martial reverie.

"A clean vest doesn't make a statesman," said Hitler contemptuously when Kahr's name was mentioned.

The Reichswehr and the police were getting ready and so were the adherents of the new government, young students



and elderly ex-officers, proletarians and bourgeois. The people of Munich occupied strategic positions at windows and street corners, ready to act as referees.

At the head of the procession marched Ludendorff and Hitler, flanked by two minor leaders. They were followed by the rank and file, some of them bearing arms, others unarmed. Toward noon of November 9th the march on Berlin began. At the Ludwig Bridge the police were swept aside. "The police were deeply moved," Hitler said later. "From the eyes of some of them tears were freely streaming." This, too, was in line with many precedents in this crying revolution.

The referees fell out of their rôles and shouted that the policemen should be killed, but Hitler wanted to have nothing to do with violence. The rank and file behind him sang patriotic anthems and they were enthusiastically received at the Marienplatz. They passed the City Hall on which the flag of the swastika was displayed. Hitler sympathizers had arrested the Socialist Burgomaster and several town councillors. At street crossings soap-box orators fired the crowd to resistance and were dragged out of sight by mounted police.

A young lieutenant rushed up to Ludendorff to report that on Odeonsplatz Reichswehrmen and police were stripping an armoured car for action and that Ludwigstrasse was black with governmental forces.

"We march," Ludendorff repeated grimly.

How could he stop? Berlin was yet far away. But Ludendorff did not know that Berlin was moving southward, that the army was on its way to punish its rebellious idol.



In the Dienerstrasse the crowd of the spectators was thinning. The air was uncannily silent and only the song of the patriots and sharp words of command relieved the tenseness.

"No German blood will be shed," Captain Röhm, a leader of the putschists had said, but First-Lieutenant Godin and Lieutenant Braun, in charge of the Reichswehr forces on the Odeonsplatz, were not of the same opinion. They were of the opinion that, Ludendorff or no Ludendorff, orders must be executed. They stood erect, like twin statues, in front of the former royal residence. No muscle moved on their faces ; they had no part in the crying revolution. They were machines, responsive to the pushing of a button, and when the crowd surged onward they raised their swords and in voices that might have belonged to automatons, shouted : "Fire."

A tall man in a black overcoat fell, next to Hitler, his face streaming with blood. There arose a terrible sound,—not the howl of an infuriated animal but of a frightened mob. Soon eighteen men were lying in front of the Residence, dead or dying. There was a stampede, firearms were flung down, and hundreds skipped, jumped, leaped into the Hofgarten and into the small streets near by. Hitler threw himself to the ground. Ludendorff walked on. It had not been he who fell, as Hitler had thought. His face set like a mask, indescribable contempt written on it, he walked toward the soldiers. They opened a path for the ex-war lord, and he disappeared in the crowd.

Herr Gustav von Kahr sat at his desk in the State Commissariat near by and had a conference with the Minister of



Education. Although the day was chilly, one of the windows was open and through this opening the crackle of the rifles could be heard distinctly. Herr Kahr stepped to the window and closed it.

Amidst the shrieking mob, Hitler jumped to the car which had followed him at a short distance and in no time he was out of danger.

Was he really out of danger? He had committed high treason and under the emergency laws it was punishable by death.

And General von Lossow in Munich telegraphed to General von Seeckt in Berlin:

“Putsch liquidated. No more troops needed.”



CHAPTER VI

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

ACCCESS to the former Military Academy in the Blumenburgstrasse was cut off by barbed wire. Mounted police kept the crowd at a distance.

"Hail Hitler," a girl in the smock of a tobacco worker shouted and began to run away, because a policeman was after her.

The prisoners were brought and the barbed-wire obstacles were opened.

"How pale he is," a young lady of the demi-monde whispered to her companion who looked like a gigolo.

"Hunger strike," he replied curtly and with an air of infinite wisdom. He was bursting with information and as she asked no more questions he volunteered it more volubly :

"They caught him three days later in the house of a friend, half German and half American, in Uffing. He refused to eat for several days."

His voice was lost in the hubbub.

There was barbed wire, too, in front of the government building in Maximilianstrasse where Dr. von Kahr resided in state.

"Beware of the dog," a sign warned the passer-by until the police removed it.

The day before the trial began the State police held target



practice in Oberwiesenfeld and the sound of the shooting was distinctly heard in Munich. Patrols were scouring the streets and arrested suspicious characters. There was a curfew at nine o'clock and the people took it as a great hardship. After all, revolution or no revolution, a Bavarian should be entitled to sip his beer in peace. But Dr. Kahr thought otherwise and what he thought in those days was law.

Adolf Hitler's portraits were no longer displayed in the streets of Munich. The Zirkus Krone was deserted and National Socialist uniforms were banned. The *Völkische Beobachter*, official organ of the party, was suppressed and National Socialist headquarters were closed. The most militant leaders of the party were in jail.

Holders of cards to the trial were subjected to a thorough search. The nine defendants were brought from the jails and placed under lock and key in the former Military Academy. A large grey car turned the corner and stopped suddenly with shrieking brakes. The guard sprang to attention as General Ludendorff stepped out of his car. Heels clicked before the tenth defendant who approached the court-room with firm steps.

On this February day of 1924 the spirit of a famous author's theatrical first-night pervaded the mess-room of the Academy transformed for this occasion into a court-room. The shining brown panels of the walls reflected a happy audience which anticipated with great pleasure the coming show. The defendants were to be sentenced for high treason. Their punishment might be death.

The court had not yet arrived and General Ludendorff held an informal levee with his co-defendants. Lieutenant-



HITLER AND LUDENDORF WITH THEIR LAWYERS

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Colonel Kriebel, who pleaded guilty to having command of the putsch troops, was a great admirer of native drinks and the roses of his cheeks gleaming in the warm room attested the beneficial effect of this admiration. He was profoundly happy for the privilege of standing in the shadow of death with the former army leader.

Ludendorff talked to Captain Röhm, chieftain of the "Reichskriegsflagge," a man in whose presence he took great pleasure because he embodied the most outstanding traditions of pre-war junkerdom. First-Lieutenant Weber, leader of the terroristic-patriotic "Oberland" League, looked more like a tubercular proletarian than a man whose life ambition was to hang a row of Reds on neatly carpentered gallows.

Justice Pöhner, formerly head of the Munich police, was in deep conversation with Hitler. Around his finely chiselled mouth a cynical smile played and it could be seen that few things that happened in the room escaped his attention. He noticed, for instance, that Herr von Kahr, who had come to testify for the State, looked sidewise at Ludendorff from behind eyes half closed, as though they were near-sighted. Dr. Pöhner wanted to have his fun out of this trial. His attorney had suggested to the State prosecutor to have the defendants assured of pardon after their conviction. In that case, he said, the testimony of the defendants would be colourless. If the State rejected the bargain, he would wash his hands of the consequences.

The court entered the room and the chatter was interrupted. The defendants clicked their heels, but Ludendorff maintained a frosty aloofness. Landesgerichtsrat Neidhardt was grandfatherly. He gave the defendants a quick smile,



or it may have been addressed only to Ludendorff. The professional judges walked quickly behind him and they were followed by two lay judges. One of the laymen was constantly wiping two pairs of glasses which, in his embarrassment, he put on his nose alternately.

No sooner did the judges settle down than they dropped out of the picture. Cameras were aimed at the defendants whom the State of Bavaria accused of high treason and whom the people of Bavaria accepted as their heroes.

Staatsanwalt Dr. Stenglein did not like the rôle of the villain of the show. Apologetically, in a voice almost inaudible, he read the indictment. Adolf Hitler was the prime mover of the plot, he declared ; it was he who had aimed at the overthrow of the State, assigned the public offices and assumed the leadership of the movement. General Ludendorff, whom the public prosecutor described as a great patriot, was acquainted with the plans of the plotters. He was accused of being the leader of the so-called national army, of issuing orders to the Reichswehr and of placing himself at the head of a demonstration in Munich in order to influence the Reichswehr and the police in favour of the plot through his prestige and commanding personality.

The State prosecutor did not deny that the expulsion of the princes by the republican government had been a high treason, nor did he want to deny that he had the greatest respect for General Ludendorff and Adolf Hitler, but the law is law and as long as it is law it must be upheld. Dr. Stenglein smiled pleasantly and sat down.

Then the president of the court gave an account of the records of the defendants. He dwelt at length on Hitler's



war career, and raised his voice when reading that he had joined the Bavarian army of his own accord and that he had been wounded twice and gassed once. Hitler interrupted to tell him that he had been wounded only once.

The trial was conducted in the manner of a round-table conference at which the defendants, attorneys, judges and the State prosecutor took their turn. They all spoke very politely, except the defendants, who were sarcastic and tried to make Herr von Kahr feel like a fool. Only the two lay judges were unhappy and out of place, as they knew nothing about the questions of high politics which the gentlemen, judges and prisoners, discussed with so much gusto.

It developed that the divergence of opinions between the judges and the accused was not unbridgeable. There were several points on which the court and even the State prosecutor found themselves in perfect harmony with the prisoners. The defendants were in a magnanimous mood and they granted that in some respects the court was not entirely wrong.

"What is the State?" Hitler asked dramatically in the course of his defence. "The State is considered to-day an economic organization," he answered. But he could not share this point of view. "The State is not an economic organization but a racial organism."

The two laymen could hardly keep their eyes open, but the court was interested and offered no objection. If a visitor from Mars had dropped into the court-room, unacquainted with previous occurrences, he would have concluded that the State was on trial and that Adolf Hitler was the public prosecutor.

"Such is the plight of Germany," Hitler shouted, "thanks



to the miserable attitude of her government." Ludendorff sat stiff like a stone Buddha, and the other defendants nodded approval.

For hours Hitler stood at attention and harangued his judges. His rounded sentences were packed with dynamite. He recalled the illegal acts of great men for which their countries hold them in veneration. Was Bismarck a traitor because he dismissed parliament and ruled by the right of his own power? Did the empire come into existence legally when Wilhelm I had himself crowned Emperor of Germany?

"The bird must sing because it is a bird. And a man born for politics must carry on his work . . . The man born to be a dictator is not pushed forward, but he forges ahead."

With flashing eyes a lady of the Munich society listened to the defendant. His masculine tenseness worked magic on her. She turned to her escort and in a voice that rang clear across the court-room she made the remark: "He is a mad genius."

With a flourish Hitler finished his peroration:

"The army we have raised grows day by day, hour by hour . . . I know your sentence. But that court high above will not ask us, 'Have you committed high treason?' That court will judge us all: the Quartermaster-General of the old army, his officers and soldiers, who have wanted to do their duty as Germans for the people and the Fatherland, who wanted to fight and die. You may doom us a thousand times and yet the goddess of the eternal court of history will tear to pieces the indictment of the State prosecutor and the sentence of the court. Her verdict will be acquittal."



The president of the court could not check the burst of applause, nor did he wish to.

Lieutenant-Colonel Kriebel said he would be proud for the rest of his life of his part in the putsch of November.

"The well-known fascination of Herr Hitler's eloquence," General von Lossow said on the witness stand, "made a great impression on me. The more frequently I heard him the weaker the impression was until I realized that his long speeches were always the same."

Herr von Kahr was the other witness. Although he could not surround himself with barbed wire in the courtroom, he had taken the precaution of having the government of which he was the head refuse him the permission to talk freely about that November night. Thus, every time the attorneys of the defendants asked him an embarrassing question, he barricaded himself behind the government prohibition.

With Herr von Kahr in the witness box the proceedings degenerated into a man-hunt of the unfortunate dictator. Dr. Pöhner was sarcastic, and the audience was delighted with his thrusts.

"When Herr Hitler tackled us with pistol in hand," Herr Kahr testified, "I gave a sign to General Lossow and Colonel Seisser to take up the clue of the comedy."

"If His Excellency claims to have played a comedy," Dr. Pöhner retorted, "I must protect him against himself, as I have known him intimately for many years. I know that he is a gentleman and not a crook."

The audience liked this. Not even Herr von Kahr's



ferocious glare and the repeated rappings of the president could prevent a contagious spread of giggling.

Ludendorff, in the armour of his fame and heavy-handed justice, went after the scalp of Herr von Kahr and missed it. He was too clumsy and the shrewd dictator got the better of him by his tight-mouthed silence.

But the General rose to the occasion after the comic element had been exhausted.

"The man standing before the seat of your judgment," he exclaimed in a voice that brooked no opposition, "stands before history's seat of judgment. History's court sends me not to prison but to Valhalla . . . If the nationalist movement fails in Germany her name will be stricken from the roll of nations."

Then he grew poetical :

"Do you hear, gentlemen, Germany crying for her lost soul ? . . . Give the men who stand before you back to the German nation which it is their duty to teach. Not words but deeds make world history."

Adolf Hitler, Dr. Pöhner, Lieutenant-Colonel Kriebel and Dr. Weber were sentenced to five years' imprisonment in a fortress. But the court wanted to be clement after having displayed its rigour. After six months, it added, the prisoners might be released. Five other conspirators were sentenced to a year and three months in prison, and three of them were immediately liberated. General Ludendorff was acquitted.

"My acquittal is a humiliation," the General exclaimed, "which this uniform and these distinctions have not deserved."



"Hail Hitler. . . . Hail Ludendorff," someone cried in the room.

"Who was that?" the president asked with a frown.

But the guards in the room did not know or did not want to know.

"Hail Hitler. . . . Hail Ludendorff." This time the acclaim came from the streets.

Heels clicked in the corridors as the prisoners were led away. Bouquets and kisses were thrown at them and they smiled proudly.

"Hail Hitler. . . . Hail Ludendorff," came more insistently from beyond the barbed wire in Blumenburgstrasse. Then there was a roar and a rush. A grey car drove up to the main entrance. It displayed the colours of the imperial regime: black, white and red. Ludendorff stepped out of the Military Academy and policemen had to protect him from the affection of his admirers. The car began slowly to move and hundreds of cheering men and women followed their hero.

"Hail Hitler," the crowd shouted, and Hitler had to appear on the balcony of the Military Academy to acknowledge the cheers.

"Hail Hitler. . . . Hail Ludendorff," two thousand throats roared in unison in Hamburg. This was April 1, Bismarck's birthday. Two thousand delegates of the German Nationalist Party cheered the result of the trial, which was a vindication.

"The day has come," the leader of the party declared in open session.



“The sun has set,” many National Socialists must have thought.

“Hitler is in prison, a martyr. Excellent publicity,” the Socialists lamented.

The mark was saved, the Dawes Committee had done its work and the avalanche of gold from America was set in motion.

Has the world ever before seen such a flow of gold? It came in tens of millions, in hundreds of millions. Only the sky was the limit. And as the gold crossed the Atlantic, factories in the Ruhr and along the Rhine, in Westphalia and in the Mark of Brandenburg, began to hum. Soon the chant of labour was in full swing and after ten years' suffering the Reich settled down to a peaceful life.

The last act of the drama was over, but behind the scenes the cleaning-up work went on. Hitler's party was prohibited in the German States. Only Thuringia made an exception, the same Thuringia against which his shock troops had carried on an invisible war half a year ago. But meanwhile Thuringia had gone reactionary and her Bolshevists were out.

Hitler's star had sunk so low that even an enemy could afford to be generous toward him.

“He was a madman,” a radical journalist wrote of him in the spring of 1924, “and a pure idealist.”

A dead enemy must be respected, as he can do no harm. And to all practical purposes Hitler was dead. But was he?



CHAPTER VII

AN INTERMEZZO IN PRISON

WACHTMEISTER BURGER was not popular with the convicts. As a matter of fact, few guards were, because they considered themselves State officials and they had their professional pride. It was very difficult to become a guard in a prison, as it was not enough to be sound in body and mind, but even one's parents must have led a righteous life. Then there was the question of faith. An atheist could not have become a prison guard in the establishment of Landsberg on the Lech. And, finally, there was the moral test. It was not enough that one should not be a thief or a forger, but one must not be a liar either. Inwardly he must be as pure as an angel, and outwardly as forbidding as the devil. Such a combination was not common, and the picked men of whom the prison force was recruited were justly proud.

Wachtmeister Burger was prouder than the other guards, first because he was a wachtmeister and, second, because he could not have become a wachtmeister if he had not been prouder than the others. He knew, more than any other man alive, that a prison guard is not just like any mortal being. He is a superior man and he must never forget that. Man is subject to outside impressions and so is the prison guard. Convicts are vicious and if the guards did not know



that they were supermen they might fall to the estate of their charges.

Then, there is another vital difference : the prisoner must address the guard as "Herr," and the guard addresses the prisoner as "Sie." The guard must cultivate a raucous voice, but the prisoner must always be gentle and sensitive. The prison guard must not for a moment forget that he enjoys man's greatest privilege,—he is free, and that the prisoner is not a man, but a caged animal.

The rookies on the force had these differences explained to them by Wachtmeister Burger scores of times. A guard had to surround himself with an atmosphere that was not the convict's. He must be a happy man—and must show it—because he is reminded of his great treasure, freedom, by the constant presence of captive human animals. The sky at which Wachtmeister Burger looked was a different sky from that which Paul Havlicek saw, a boy whom misery had made a forger. Wachtmeister Burger walked with his legs wide apart and prisoners had to hug the wall every time they happened to pass him. Even in the way he walked there was an assertion of superiority, a claim to be considered a superman.

Wachtmeister Burger was a stickler for those trifling niceties that make existence more pleasant. In his presence the prisoner had to wear a mask, not too gloomy and not too cheerful, just the right combination. Society, he said, was sending its outlaws to houses of correction and he did his best to carry out society's intentions. What would be the inducement to remain honest if criminals were treated like any other human beings? This was his pet idea which he



liked to set forth at length in the best room of the *Gay Convict*. He was always sure of a sympathetic audience. A Wachtmeister of a State prison was a good man to have among one's friends.

The convicts of Landsberg prison would not have recognized their stern keeper when he slammed the iron gate of the wing of common criminals and entered the part of the prison set aside for political captives, known as the Festung.

A self-satisfied smile played around the lips of Wachtmeister Burger as he walked along the whitewashed corridor of the Festung. This was a much more cheerful place than the rest of the prison. Its windows were large, and through them the odour of lilacs was wafted from the village.

Wachtmeister Burger stopped in front of one of the doors, adjusted his uniform, forced his face into a broader grin, and knocked at the door.

"Herein," came the prompt reply.

He entered the room, which was full of flowers. It was a large room with a white bed, a table and a chair. The wings of the window were thrown open and the place was bathed in sunshine. But there were bars on the window at which a man stood, dressed in the Bavarian hunter's green jacket, wearing his collar and tie. The man looked out into the Spring dejectedly.

"Guten Tag, Herr Hitler," the Wachtmeister said politely.

"Guten Tag," came the curt reply.

* * * * *

In the evening the prisoners met in the social room, centrally located, equipped for smoking and for a little drinking too. Their twelve rooms radiated from the centre and



they were intercommunicating. Sitting on the arms of chairs and on tables the heroes of the November putsch talked about the past and mapped out plans for the future. Hitler was morose and he talked little. Perhaps the audience was too small to suit his taste or he could not see himself in the future. Germany was getting prosperous and when people have plenty to eat they do not care a rap about the government.

Visitors to the prison carried away the impression that Hitler was a bitter man, suspicious and vindictive. His friends were fighting for the spoils. But of spoils there were very little, mostly the bones of a rich repast.

Young Ekkehard was always at his heels in the prison, and his loyalty was touching. Young Hess, secretary to Hitler, was jealous of Ekkehard and even more effusive in his admiration of the caged idol. Dr. Weber was very unhappy in prison because his legs were long and the rooms not large enough. Lieutenant-Colonel Kriebel was angry most of the day and delivered himself of long tirades against the traitors.

Six trees in the courtyard of the prison put up a brave fight to make the place look more cheerful. They were lean trees, probably acacias because in the early Spring they produced candle-like white flowers which were pleasant to look at and whose scent was sweet. Years ago, the prison saga had it, a prisoner woke up one night and began to shriek that he could no longer listen to what two trees, which seemed to hold each other in embrace, were saying. It was a windy night and the branches of the trees were swishing. The following day the convict had to be taken into the padded room of the insane.

Hitler looked at the six trees. He knew their number



because he had counted them a thousand times. At one time he began to count their branches but gave it up. He did not like the way the trees looked, they were too wizened, lacking in energy and will. He did not like their white flowers and their feeble efforts to scent the prison court. It was like a plain woman trying desperately to appear beautiful.

Outside the prison there was grass and many healthy-looking trees. Craning one's neck one could see them from the fortress.

"Herr Hitler," Wachtmeister Burger began and waited respectfully until he should be encouraged to speak.

Hitler's eyes roved to the man's uniform. Wachtmeister Burger put on his most mysterious air, tiptoed to him and whispered into his ear :

"Herr Hitler, you can go out if you want to."

This gave Hitler a start. He had not been in prison for more than a month.

"I mean," the guard corrected himself, realizing he had made a mistake, "I mean you can go out two hours a day."

Once more Hitler's face was a mask. Wachtmeister Burger thought of a young prisoner in the common criminal's pen. The young man had deep-seated eyes which seemed to be lost in a whirlpool of flame. He was a Bolshevik, found guilty of some common crime and tucked away safely in Landsberg. Just the other day the young man had run up a high fever, and had tossed on his cot. The doctor ordered him to the prison hospital. When Wachtmeister Burger had last seen him the young man was writhing at his feet, entreating him to let him lie on the grass outside the gate for



only an hour . . . ten minutes. He would kiss every blade of grass, he would be happy and healthy.

But Hitler was not happy. He was not moved by the warden's magnanimity, transmitted through Wachtmeister Burger. He would not give his word of honour not to run away once he was outside the gate. He was not anxious to lie on the grass, not even to walk on it. He did not want to see the oak trees.

A hasty conference was improvised with Herren Ekkehard and Hess. They might succeed where the prison guard failed. Ekkehard spoke to Hitler and he was insistent. Then Hess spoke to him and he was eloquent. He said a man like Hitler had no right to deprive the Fatherland of his work and energy. Did Hitler not realize that the offer of two hours' freedom a day had nothing to do with the Bavarian government, but was the spontaneous proposition of the prison warden? What would the warden say if his initiative were rejected?

Hitler yielded and Hess accompanied him daily on his walks outside the walls. When Hitler passed the guards at the gate they saluted. But Hitler continued moody and he struggled against being drawn into political discussions. He had had enough of the forum's woes. Frederick the Great was right in describing humanity as "verdammt Rasse." The stars were different. They had life and intelligence, they were friendly and understanding. So they talked about astrology, but they did not talk about the moon. It was dead and ugly, there was no life nor fire in it.

Friends came in droves and the postman delivered bundles of letters. So he was not entirely forgotten after all. The



suggestion of young Hess to write his memoirs found favour in Hitler's eyes. The same opportunity might not present itself again. A busy life would not tolerate his sitting down to write. Prison was the ideal place to have his attention focused on a subject.

"But I don't believe in books," Hitler argued, "I believe in the power of the spoken word."

"Quite rightly," Hess came back with the answer, "but only for contemporaries. The spoken word does not easily survive the grave. A man playing a leading rôle owes it to humanity to perpetuate his guiding thoughts."

Hitler liked this talk about immortality. Yes, he would write the Bible of the National Socialist Party. Should the Jews have a monopoly on books? There was their dishevelled Marx, an old charlatan, whose "Kapital" everybody quoted and nobody read. So he began to write "Mein Kampf" at the age of thirty-five.

As he went on with his work with increasing interest it turned out to be a peculiar book, the masterpiece of an illiterate. "Masterpiece," Hitler thought as the round sentences rolled under his pen. In its eight hundred pages it says practically nothing. There is not one idea in those long chapters except the idea of an unscrupulous politician telling the world how to stuff the ballot box. The high lights of the book are such advice as that mass meetings must be held in the evening because the power of resistance of the crowd is then reduced to a minimum. The Bible of the National Socialists turned out to be a jumble of practical ideas set down with a brazenness which would amaze even the most cynical of politicians.



“My Struggle” it is called, and yet Hitler, writing in his prison room, wrote very little about himself. What was he to write about his past? That he was a young man of humble origin and without any distinction was not a thing he cared to tell the world. Nor did he say much about his rôle as a human cipher on the Western front. Hitler could not see the glamour and drama of an uneventful life. He had never read Rousseau’s “Confessions” and even if he had read it he would not have been impressed. He skipped over the most important phases of his development because he was ashamed of his humble past. He was insincere and left out essential details when they did not tally with his ideas as to how a hero should be born.

“It is the book of a small-minded person,” the liberal Press declared. The liberal Press may have made mistakes in its appraisal of many of Hitler’s acts but in this it had the concurrence even of many National Socialists.

Yet for one having the patience to read this verbose exposition of commonplace thoughts there is some fascination in the book. It is a tense book written by a man who lacks knowledge and tact, but who possesses vitality.

Writing came to Hitler easily and it made him satisfied with himself. Now at least he knew he could do anything to which he turned his hand. He was no longer so guarded in talking about politics. His audience had grown larger and he was amused at the thought that while the idea of his judges was to have him cleansed of his dissidence, in the Festung he was spreading his gospel among the prison guards. Hitler thought he was back in the Zirkus Krone. This practice was good for him to keep him in training and to



clarify his thoughts. The prison cook made special cakes for the political prisoners and he sent the guards to Hitler for enlightenment. The guards praised Hitler highly because he spoke to them with an earnest air and because he was not snobbish. They shook his hand cordially and were glad when he remembered their names. Hitler would one day cut a figure in the world and it was no harm to be friends with a powerful man.

In the prison of Landsberg there came into being a "cell" of the National Socialist Party. And when in December, 1924, the hour came to bid good-bye to the hospitable prison of Landsberg the warden made a courtesy call on Hitler, took leave of him warmly and informed him with a half-mocking air :

"Herr Hitler, I also am a National Socialist."



CHAPTER VIII

THE UNDERTOW

HITLER was out of jail, but Germany did not care. She was absorbed in contemplation of the “Amerikanisches Wirtschaftswunder,” the American economic miracle, and what she could get out of it. While Hitler was in prison Germany had gone America-mad. Myriads of articles and no end of books were written about the United States. The dentist stilled the pains of his patients by talking about the Transatlantic Eldorado. The barber consoled the client whose face he had scratched by saying that all was well in America. Evening parties were never short of topics of conversation. America was ubiquitous. It was no longer the menace looming in the dark but a new ideal.

“Let us concentrate,” the Germans said, “on rationalization, the major problem of the age. Let us concentrate on essentials, like the Americans. Let us discard the superfluous and the extraneous.”

What was the secret of America's prosperity? American mental processes were dissected in scholarly works. Germany stood on the eve of a great discovery. It was called rationalization. Machines were keyed to a different tune and all Germany lustily joined the chorus. Waste was cut down and production methods were simplified. Prices were



lowered and wages were increased. New markets were found and transport was improved. The past will be forgotten, was the cry, and the Germany of the future will be a rationalized Germany,—the America of Europe.

Man, too, must be purged of waste and his mental processes must be cleansed of unnecessary complications. Out of the retorts of psychological laboratories a new man must be produced,—the man of the machine age. A new Golem was on the threshold of life, endowed with a soul and steeled to face the practical world. Patriotism was more than listening to wild speeches in the Zirkus Krone, while consuming Himalayas of sausage. What was the use of making faces at the French and rattling non-existent sabres? The industrial renaissance would announce to the world that Germany was not conquered. Out of the nirvana would rise Germany's speed supremacy of the seas and of the air. The factories of the Ruhr would become models for all the world. Vast monsters, belching steel and iron, were born on the banks of the Rhine. Enormous dynamos were set in motion and Germany looked at them with fascination. The nation of Kant, Goethe and Wagner stood reverently in the shadow of a machine of apocalyptic proportions. Life had been vested with a new meaning. The day of the "neue Sachlichkeit" had come.

The modern houses in Pankow, with their bold horizontal embrace of the infinite and their thousands of glittering windows, were symbols of a rational new Germany, stripped of detail and riveting its attention on the essentials. Eric Mendelsohn in Berlin composed new national anthems in stone and brick. Those houses chanted of the Reich's rejuvena-



tion and their voices drowned out the stammer of a Hitler lieutenant about the "Schande am Rhein." With tears in their eyes the proletarians of Frankfort-am-Main discovered bathrooms in their houses. The grandiose railway station of Stuttgart pointed a symbolic finger at the German heaven looking at the life-and-death struggle of a nation. Four years of war and six years of defiant peace had destroyed billions' worth of materials and trillions' worth of spiritual values. The hour of revenge had come, but it would be a revenge through creation and not by wanton destruction. The bathroom had conquered the swastika ; the United States had conquered Hitler.

America, too, made a great discovery,—a Klondyke across the ocean. It discovered a great nation, trembling with excitement to infuse into its work all the knowledge and energy of its creative talents and lacking the wherewithal of production. America would fertilize the soil of Germany with its surplus gold and the soil would yield marvellous products. Had the world ever before seen such collaboration of two giants ? Surely, the hour had struck for the opening of a new era in which poverty would be unknown and human misery would be a thing of the past.

"It will take five years before I shall have reorganized the party," the Hitler of November 8 said in the *Völkischer Beobachter*. But the Reich was of a different mind. "The patient is dead," wrote the *Tagebuch*, referring to the National Socialist Party. "The patient is dead," echoed Germany amidst the clatter of machines and the noise of factory whistles.

Did the party still owe allegiance to Adolf Hitler ? What



did the Austrian want in a Teutonic country? Even though the spoils were not promising there were pretenders for the throne of the young man who had just left the prison in Landsberg. The discord of failure was devastating the morale of the rank and file. Germany had no time to look up from her work while ships brought into port barrels of American gold. These were not the times for political agitation. A new Germany was in the making, not in the galleries of the Zirkus Krone but in the factories of the Ruhr and Rhineland, in the mines of Silesia and on the weaving looms of Saxony.

General Ludendorff took no notice of the new world around him. For him the sun had stopped in November 1918 but he was certain he could start it on its way again. His obsessions were Berlin, Paris, and Moscow. In his house at Wilhelmshöhe he worked overtime proving, and hoping perhaps, that another era was just around the corner. Dressed in his antiquated armour he tilted at the chimera and brought to earth a French, Czech and Polish alliance. He cleared the port of Hamburg of bothersome greyhounds of the ocean to permit the British troops to land. He reached across the Alps and made an alliance with Mussolini. On his white charger he attacked Rome and Jerusalem, pondering over the perfidy of the Popes and over the sayings of the Wise Men of Zion.

Bavaria, which had mothered Hitlerism, turned against her infant. While fulminating against the Jewish Berlin, she suppressed over-intransigent nationalism so that the prospective tourist trade should not be damaged. The Bavarian Alps were open to business and Bayreuth expected its tribute



of gold. Munich was full of visitors with horn-rimmed glasses, ejaculating pious "ohs" before the pictures which the stars in the guide-book indicated were famous.

If Bavaria was ungrateful there was one more reason why a real Teutonic land should trumpet forth the eternal truth about the blond man's right to the site of Paradise. Up in Mecklenburg, Herr Albrecht von Gräfe, Hussar by profession and gentleman farmer by necessity, was busily weaving the threads of intrigue. In this real German land, Lutheran to the core and not Papist like Bavaria, his "Deutschvölkische Freiheitspartei," German Racial Liberty Party, thrived. Until the storm should spend itself and the German National Labour Party of Adolf Hitler could work in the open, it was politic to have the *Freiheitspartei* serve as the cloak of illegal machinations. Herr Gräfe rubbed his hands with glee when the merger took place and emerged the "Deutschvölkische Freiheitsbewegung," the racial liberty movement, of which he hoped to be the private god. A diplomat in the skin of a fat peasant, Gregor Strasser, chemist and demagogue, was Hitler's *officier-de-liaison* with Herr von Gräfe. If it had not been for Strasser's loyalty Hitler would have found he was a stranger among his party friends upon leaving the prison. But Gregor Strasser was not the man to generate enthusiasm for himself. He was too well fed for that and his cheeks were too rosy. He was the man to produce enthusiasm for others if thereby he could draw his own dividends in fame and reputation. Gregor Strasser was no money-fiend, or he and his brother, Otto, would not have sold their chemist's shop to help the party. But he had a throat famished for publicity and praises.



In the Bavarian Landtag there were murmurs and veiled threats against the dictator in prison.

“Away with Hitler,” Dr. Rudolf Buttmann shouted. His voice was strong and it carried much weight at the Sunday morning political chats in the beer-halls. Dr. Buttmann disliked Austrians and particularly he disliked Hitler. Shrewd observers maintained that Dr. Buttmann liked only one man, and that was Dr. Buttmann. But honeyed words of love of Fatherland were flowing from his lips and it would not be just to suggest that when he said Fatherland he meant himself.

Gregor Strasser was a member of the Bavarian Landtag also and he had more than one lively encounter with the anti-Hitler forces. He was a far better speaker than Dr. Buttmann and his irony was devastating. Although he had had offers from other parties, accompanied by promises of rapid advancement from the ranks, he had remained steadfast.

Had he not remained loyal the last traces of the Hitler organization would have been wiped out of existence. What helped more than anything to keep the party alive was his successful effort to extend the work of the National Socialist Party, working in disguise, to the other States of the Reich. Thus a movement born out of the peculiar conditions of Bavaria assumed a national significance.

When the guard at the gate of Landsberg prison greeted Hitler for the last time, the dictator of the National Socialists faced the most dangerous fight of his life, a fight against his friends. Ludendorff was aloof, wrapped up in his obsessions. Dr. Pöhner had joined the Nationalists and was doing his best to recruit Hitler's partisans for his new friends. Lieutenant



Kriebel and Captain Röhm went their own way. The American economic miracle had done its work. In the new Reichstag of December 1924 there were only 14 National Socialists as against 32 members in the previous Reichstag, and of these not more than 4 recognized Hitler as their leader. Herr Gräfe in Mecklenburg had done his weaving well.

It was up-hill work to make a country exerting its muscles to build up what had been destroyed in ten years take heed of Herr Adolf Hitler with two tufts of moustache under his nose, who was telling the world how to hate. Hitler noticed the changed attitude of the world toward him but he did not notice the change of the world. His sensitiveness failed to register where his own person was not involved. The chant of the machines was lost on him because his ears were attuned to the chant of eulogies.

"You cannot make this man understand he is no longer the star of the show," people behind the scenes began to whisper.

"An ageing *prima donna* is the most pathetic sight," others answered with a twinkle in their eyes.

If Hitler had not taken himself so seriously he would have been a pathetic sight. But while the gigantic dynamos on the Ruhr electrified Germany he went on with his plans of party building.

"A maniac," his foes smiled, and left him alone. Hitler could no longer gratify his ambition to see himself maligned in every morning's paper. The newspapers took no notice of him. The consensus of opinion was that an unemployed carpenter whom a turn of fortune had placed in the lime-



light for one night could not do better than try his hand at bringing back the past. Life had re-enacted the story of the beggar kidnapped by the king's halberdiers who found himself on a silk throne for one day. The beggar was again in the gutter but he did not know it, because his mind was obsessed with the glory of one day.

In the Autumn of 1925 Hanover witnessed a battle royal. "We will not be governed by the Munich Pope," an anti-Hitlerite shouted at the party congress. Hitler had stayed away from the battle and commissioned Gottfried Feder, the party apostle and lawgiver, to take up the cudgels on his behalf. Feder was popular with the majority because it understood little of what he said and therefore reached the conclusion that he must be a profound thinker. It is unlikely that Hitler sent Feder to Hanover—as has been suggested and—with the devilish idea of putting the delegates to sleep, so preventing their rebellion. But Hitler made no mistake in sending the man to the congress whose commonplace theories the other delegates had accepted as the infallible party dogma.

The Hanover congress began as a talk feast. Sentences packed with adjectives were hurled across the aisles. Long perorations about "Weltanschauung" and ideology were listened to with feigned attention while the delegates rolled their own speeches under their tongues. Then Gregor Strasser's younger brother, Otto, took the floor and created a curious situation. The programme of the movement was as yet inchoate, and Otto Strasser wanted to make it more definite and more pro-labour.

The present social order is doomed, Strasser declared,



because it is based on private profit. Since production is a social function the distribution of wealth should be made on a social foundation. Nationalism and patriotism are meaningless as long as they express the platonic wish to give the poor the crumbs from the rich man's table.

"Order, order," some of the delegates shouted and pounded the tables, "What is this? Anarchism or nihilism?"

"Not yet," Strasser answered with a quiet irony, "Not yet, but it will be worse than nihilism. Nature has placed all its treasures within man's grasp and man squanders them in pursuit of his selfish interests.

"What good does it do a millionaire to have his millions as long as hundreds of thousands of his countrymen are in dire need? How dares such a man call himself a patriot, a loyal son of his fatherland? He is a traitor of the worst kind because he not only betrays his fatherland but also robs it."

There was general consternation among the delegates. Could Hitler tolerate such rebellious words? Herr Feder assured his party friends that Strasser was speaking only for himself.

"Before all idealism," Strasser continued above the indignant murmur of the Nazis, "must stand the motto 'bread for the nation.' Bread is the fatherland and it must be gained through the community's own resources. Imperialistic wars must be rejected and no self-respecting nation should want colonies."

So far the programme proposed by Otto Strasser had followed Marxian lines. Where his road swerved away sharply was in his condemnation of democracy. Capitalism



and socialism were afflicted by the congenital sickness of liberalism. Their points of departure were different but their object was identical. Socialism was steering toward State capitalism with all its unwholesome results. What was to be done? National economy must be taken out of the hands of politicians who look at life not in the light of reason and necessity but from the point of view of personal convenience. Legislative power must be vested, therefore, not in politicians but in the representatives of all vocations.

Feder took the stand for Hitler and dissociated his name from disruptive aims. While he was not quite certain what Hitler thought the party should accomplish, he had more positive ideas as to how this indefinite purpose should be achieved. In striving for the realization of the new Germany, the third Reich, he declared, no agencies should be despised even though they be those of the anarchists and nihilists. Political assassination could be connived at as an extreme measure.

These theoretical combats clarified Hitler's position as a "middle of the road" man, afraid to commit himself through his spokesman to any radical moves to justify the "Socialist" in the name of his party. But the majority of the delegates in Hanover were in a decidedly anti-Hitler mood and just to show him their defiance they voted to endorse the expropriation of the properties of the members of former ruling houses without compensation. Germany then had to make up her mind what to do with the claims of the princes who wanted money for their possessions.

Repudiated by his partisans in Hanover and chided for



Lacking a constructive programme, Hitler decided to withdraw to grounds already explored. This man of Braunau had never trusted Prussia, even though he admired its arrogance. Bavaria was different,—a land with less power of resistance, more feminine. The *Freiheitsbewegung* was slipping through his fingers, so he dissolved the alliance. Once more the National Socialist Party marched into battle under its own flags. Marshal von Hindenburg was now President of the Reich, distrusted by loyal republicans who were unaware as yet that one day he would be the main support of the new order.

Until the Spring of 1926 Hitler was groping to find the invisible enemy that paralysed his movement. At the Bamberg Congress he found it. It was the United States of America, the corrupter of Teutonic morals.

A dam had to be built against the flood of American gold. The Bamberg programme suggested the establishment of the United States of Europe. But it was not the super-State of Count Coudenhove-Kalergi or of Aristide Briand. Hitler's European super-State was an aggressive land. It would include all the countries interested in preserving their racial purity and in resisting America's supremacy. Since the Dawes Plan the National Socialists had become more violently anti-American. Did not the plan which symbolized Teutonia's humiliation bear the name of an American whom Dr. Joseph Göbbels, a leader of the party, described in print as an "erstwhile bank robber"?

America's guilt had been brought to light. It was America's money that had thwarted the relentless efforts of the German Fascist host. America was helping to build a



Tower of Babel of gold, so as to defy the wrath of the German God whose will would destroy an unrepentant Reich. It was America whose influence in the Reich must be destroyed so that Germany's soul might be saved. Was it mere coincidence that the then head of the Reichsbank who has since openly admitted his National Socialist sympathies began an offensive against the financial structure of the Reich and began to undermine the confidence of the world in the durability of the new regime?

A round of applause greeted Hitler when he explained to the Zirkus Krone in Munich his victory over the powers of darkness at the Bamberg conference. He was now the undisputed master in the field, unwilling to give quarter to the former rebels and their like. He stood before his admirers as a super-Napoleon, improved with the relentless energy of the Iron Chancellor. There were to be no more mutinies in the party, he vowed. The movement was to have one head and that was Adolf Hitler. Democracy and parliamentary party government were banished. "Le roy le veult," as the Norman rulers said. The doctrine of infallibility was not proclaimed in the Fascist camp but it was understood that Hitler could commit no error, or if he did the error would result in benefits.

In the midst of heroic labours Hitler found leisure to turn his attention to questions of another nature. While steam-rolling the opposition, he wrote a book about the *South Tyrolean Question and the Problem of German Alliance*. The book is as verbose as its title.

A political enemy of Hitler's said at a public function, more in admiration than in anger, that the head of the Nazis



is the most logical practitioner of human insanity. This comment was made on the seemingly senseless acts and utterances of the Fascist would-be dictator. What was the sense—one would like to know—of Hitler's writing a book about South Tyrol, instead of addressing himself to any of the 25 points of his party programme which were simply crying for elucidation and comment? Yet Hitler probably knew what he was doing when he wrote the book. It is a bid, over the dead body of German South Tyrol, for the friendship of Italian Fascism. Hitler cast around for outside allies and his eyes fell on Mussolini.

In arousing Mussolini's sympathies he threw overboard one of the most important claims of the German-speaking world, the return of South Tyrol, taken by Italy after the world war, to Austria with which it is largely one in language and in blood. In this book, too, Hitler applies his standard explanation of complex phenomena. It is on account of a conspiracy of Jews and Bolsheviks, he says in the book, that certain Germans take so much sympathetic interest in the plight of the South Tyroleans.

In these years of German work and progress Hitler and his lieutenants had the leisure to strengthen the structure of the movement. Before the November putsch it was built on a vague dissatisfaction with conditions and on the peculiar appeal of Hitler's emotional eloquence to the multitude. The financial basis of the party was insecure, and its political attitude, apart from generalities, was vacillating.

Women now came forward to stiffen the backbone of national resistance with their offerings. Former active army officers, trained to the goose-step and unversed in the ways



of the machine age, swelled the ranks of the discontented and added their pittance to the party treasury. Even though the machines were humming their chant of labour the inflation had incapacitated legions of men and women. The road to a prosperous Germany was strewn with the bodies of the former middle classes, reduced to the status of the proletarian. These pariahs were ready to embrace any new creed, no matter how extreme its dogmas, if it enabled them to keep their white collars and their dignity.

"The crank brigade," a Socialist called the National Socialist Party in the days of Germany's prosperity. And a crank brigade it must have seemed to anyone who followed the endless debates at which the *ci-devant* aristocracy and middle classes betrayed their horrified helplessness and sought last-minute cures in quack medicines.

"The only issue of the National Socialist Party must be anti-Semitism," some people said and the old ladies and decrepit generals shouted loud hurrah.

"A crusade against Rome and Catholicism is the only remedy," warned devout Protestants with an eye on Catholic France.

"What is wrong with the Fatherland is that it is over-centralized," asserted one faction.

"What is wrong with the Fatherland is that it is not sufficiently centralized," asserted the other faction.

Amid the conflicting views Hitler went his way warily, as careful in his utterances as an American presidential candidate. While he poured abuse on his enemies he took care not to be over-offensive, for fear that if he stepped on a strong man's toe he might be returned to Landsberg,



there to finish the Nazi training course for guards and warden.

But Hitler took care that others should say the words he could not say. Young Dr. Joseph Göbbels, club-footed and venomous, was spitting poison in all directions. He imitated Hitler even in the inflexion of his voice and was considered the chieftain's spokesman. He invaded Berlin, which Hitler had never dared to do, and made it a stronghold of German Fascism. Dr. Göbbels proclaimed :

"The leader is not selected. He is here when he is needed."

But the contemptuous opponent answered :

"Adolf Hitler is dead, even though he does not know it."

America was credited with having killed Adolf Hitler. Did the opponent know that Hitler, in spite of his opposition to American influence, had derived profit from American methods? That he had learned American advertising methods and had introduced into Germany's political life the result of his knowledge of American high pressure salesmanship? How he had done this and with what result will be for a later page to tell, but he was the first one in post-war Germany to apply mass methods to the fabrication of public opinion.

The machines in the Ruhr were growing until they darkened the horizon. Hands used to labour were idle because the machines took their work. The undertow was lapping the shores and the tides were receding. The economic miracle, across the Atlantic, showed signs of vanishing into the thin air. What will happen when the flow of gold from America is arrested, Germany began to ask? What will



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happen when America is engulfed by its own recklessness ? Is this mainly a spurious prosperity built on a mirage ? Prophets of bad omen spoke of an impending catastrophe in the United States. If they were right, what would happen to Germany ?

Hitler shrugged his shoulders, and remarked cryptically :
“ The road to salvation lies across the path of privation.”
Long have the chosen people been sitting at the flesh-pots of Egypt. The hour will strike and the bondage will be ended.



CHAPTER IX

THE NAZIS ARE COMING!

“**T**ROMMELFEUER,” came the order from Nazi headquarters. “Offensive on all Fronts,” cried the *Völkischer Beobachter*. “Swastika’s Decisive Onslaught,” echoed the minor party organs. In thousands of mass meetings, in factories, on the streets, in the families, the order was repeated. There was to be a new Battle of the Marne, which must end in victory.

In the Nazi centres there was feverish activity. Messengers were rushing in and out, telephones were ringing incessantly, shock troopers stiffened into salute. On the eve of the decisive battle the general staff was in high spirits. The American gold had been withdrawn, the old pillars of the republic had crumbled to pieces, and out of the dust of the crashing edifice rose the Nazi’s hope. The earth was quaking in Wall Street, and the world’s bankers were in full retreat. Lombard Street, too, was suffering from the ailments of the morning after. The world war did not end in 1918, it only entered on a new phase. At the beginning of 1930 the Nazi millennium would begin. The war would end, after all, with Germany’s victory, but of a Germany in which the heads of the Communist and Socialist traitors were cluttering the streets.

“This is the last battle . . .” the crowd sang lustily as it



turned into Wedding's Müllerstrasse in the north of Berlin. But there was no swastika on the flag of this crowd. Two sharp reports of revolvers were heard and two men lay on the pavement. The Nazis had attacked the Communists. There was a free for all fight, then a whistle signal.

"The Shupos are here," someone shouted and out of a by-street emerged the policemen in their green uniforms. In no time the street was quiet except for the two wounded men.

"Down with the government," shouted the Nazis the same evening in some other part of the town.

"Down with the government," shouted the Communists right across the street.

"Na also," beamed a drunken sailor at the bar, "all these people are of the same opinion." The next minute the Nazis and Communists were at one another's throats and the drunken sailor was cowering behind the bar.

Michael Spiessbürger had not had work for ten months,—the machine had thrown him out of gear. Alternately he attended the Nazi and the Communist meetings. The Nazis told him the Jews and the Bolshies—including, of course, the Socialists and other "anti-war criminals"—were to blame, and the Bolshies told him the Nazis and Sozis were to blame, not to speak of the capitalists and the rest of humanity. So when Michael went home in the evening his head was in a whirl. But he liked his head to be in a whirl because he had no other use for it and it was fun to be courted by such good men and eloquent speakers as the two parties had.

Michael, however, preferred the Nazis because at their meetings he rubbed shoulders with people of the very best



class. At these meetings he could console himself that it was no shame to live on bread and beans when one's neighbours were such fine men.

Sometimes a general would mount the platform and would address the audience as comrades, which made Michael applaud until his palms began to ache. On such occasions he could not help looking around with a triumphant smile—since Michael was a simple soul—to see whether the others took notice that the general had addressed *him* as his comrade.

Michael liked the proud bearing of the young men in white shirts who marched into the hall to the tune of the "Horst Wessel" song, which told the sad tale of a young Nazi assassinated by the Communists. So immobile the young men stood that they might have been taken for statues but for their flushed cheeks.

The average German liked the blare of the brass band striking up the song about King Frederick, the dauntless hero, and the other patriotic songs, which brought back pleasant memories of the day when he faced bullets and not the reproachful eyes of his wife.

He liked the huge posters hanging from the balconies, telling him that he had a legal right to a place in the sun and that he would have it if he followed the instructions of the leaders and listened to the speeches of Adolf Hitler.

On this night Michael Spiessbürger was to have a particular treat. The leader of the party was not only to deliver an address but also to pass a detachment of shock troops in review. Michael's heart leapt with exultation. The chatter and the smoke, the rasping voice of his neighbour and the glaring lights made him feel a different man—they made



him feel that he was alive and that one day he might be less wretched. The very thought of that day brought a wave of warm blood to his temples. Settling down comfortably on his hard bench he reflected that he would have at least three more hours to enjoy this congenial setting.

"Trommelfeuer," read the inscription on one of the posters.

"Offensive on all fronts," read the inscription on the other.

A trumpet signal was a sign for hushed attention. From a door emerged Adolf Hitler, in brown breeches and brown shirt, whip in the hand, a lock of hair falling into his left eye, tense, magnetic, austere.

"Stillgestanden," commanded a deputy chief of the Fascist army and the shock detachment stiffened to attention. With one bounding step the deputy stood in front of the dictator and in a clear voice made his report.

"Hail," shouted the crowd and arms were raised to the Fascist salute.

When Hitler lowered his arm, the sea of arms subsided.

Michael Spiessbürger liked the harsh voice of the man on the stage, and he liked his electrifying intensity. As Hitler spoke Michael felt he, Michael Spiessbürger, unemployed iron-worker, was assuming gigantic proportions. His head touched the ceiling and then it reached the sky. Stars were circling around him and Michael knew he was the centre of the universe, the source of heat and fire. He knew that the planets were revolving about him and that all he had to do was to move a finger and, lo and behold ! the world would be a different place to live in.



If Michael Spiessbürger had been endowed with the miraculous capacity to see himself from the speakers' platform he would have had a different impression. He would have seen himself a drop in the ocean, a tiny point on a vast expanse, entirely absorbed by the element, with no will of his own except the will to move rhythmically with myriads of other points.

Thus Hitler's great offensive began after the retreat of the enemy, the American gold, to Eldorado's distant shores. In the State of Baden alone, for which we have exact figures, there were some 900 well-attended Nazi meetings in the month of March of 1930.

At the same time, what Hitler described as the ride of the Nazis into the German Valhalla had begun. At the end of 1929 they had gained admission to the councils of nearly all the municipalities of Prussia, Bavaria, Saxony and Hesse. The drumfire was further increased. Several Nazi registration bureaus had to be closed temporarily, so large was the number of applicants for membership and so great was the knowledge of human psychology in the entourage of Adolf Hitler.

The first Fascist Minister took office in Germany at the beginning of the new year. It was Dr. Wilhelm Frick, who had stood trial with Hitler in Munich's former Military Academy. An old public official, and little else, Frick became Minister of the Interior in the Thuringian government. Another Hitler nominee was appointed Councillor of the Thuringian State.

The city of Pirmasens, in the Bavarian Palatinate, had now a Nazi Burgomaster. In the council of Coburg the



Hitler cohorts had a clear majority. Bayreuth, too, listened to a new Wotan—a Fascist councillor—thundering against Jewish participation in the city's fairs of horse and grain.

The intelligence spread like wildfire through Nazi headquarters that the government of the Socialist Hermann Müller was in serious danger. The People's Party, which under Gustav Stresemann had been safely harnessed to the chariot of the republic, began to balk at the distasteful task and threatened to upset the arrangement. Out the Nazi emissaries went to reconnoitre the field of operations and they came back with beaming faces. The Populists, always friendly to capital, were determined not to saddle large incomes with additional taxation. There was jubilation in the Nazi ranks and the wires were hot with strict orders to redouble efforts and increase agitation.

Signs of a gradual breakdown of authority were not lacking. In the Spring of 1930 the number of Nazi-Bolshie encounters increased. The object of the fight was the same on both sides—to incapacitate the enemy, but the methods were different. The Nazis had taken a liking to rubber sticks, while the Bolshies showed a preference for beer jars, the skull-cracking capacity of which had been proved. Many of the battles were fought for the possession of roadside inns, but most of them had not even that much justification.

The Nazi astrologers looked at the stars and declared that under similar constellations the march on Rome of the Fascist forces had taken place. Nearly seven years after the Munich putsch Berlin would be reached.

The Socialists, the strongest party in the Reichstag, looked at the proceedings with mild indignation. As long as the



Nazis and Bolshies crushed the bases of one another's skulls they performed an important public service and they should not be discouraged from their laudable zeal. But when the National Socialist "cells" were found to have made their way to the army they were stirred to a more serious view. The "Reichsbanner," the militant organization of loyal republicans, shared the Socialist apprehension. A new set of laws was adopted for the more effective protection of the republican regime. The Berlin government had no desire to play the rôle of Signor Facta's cabinet before the march on Rome.

The Reich's Socialist Minister, Karl Severing, refused to contribute the federal government's share to the upkeep of the Thuringian police, on the ground that it was contaminated by Nazi influence. The Müller government in Berlin fell and Hitler chanted a pæan. He announced that the zero hour was approaching. The shock troops were kept in readiness and the drumfire of exhortation was kept up ceaselessly at thousands of public meetings. The *Völkischer Beobachter* repeated its demand that the Ministers of the fallen government should be tried for malfeasance in office and, if possible, its members should be publicly hanged.

Dr. Heinrich Brüning, unassuming head of the Catholic Centre Party, took the reins. Power in such times offered no inducement, except that of martyrdom. Matthias Erzberger, another man of the Centre, and Walther Rathenau, a genius of thought and action, had paid with their lives for their desire to save their country. Hitler not only invited customers to buy his patent medicine but he denounced the opponent as a quack and prospective murderer. Dr. Göbbels in Berlin was applying the torch to a large assortment of



powder boxes at the same time. The powder box might have more sense than the torch-bearer and it might refuse to be ignited. But one never knew. The patriot might yet succeed in blowing up his country.

In April two million people received unemployment relief and three months later their number was near three million. The States and municipalities were at the end of their tether. Berlin was overrun by an army of beggars, fastening their eyes on the pavement in search for a lost penny or a soiled butt of cigarette. Immaculately dressed men and women, their clothes shiny from too much brushing, cluttered the approaches to the Potsdamer Bahnhof offering newspapers and counting their pennies, earned in mortification and in shame. Hungry faces peered into the gilded magnificence of the Café Vaterland in which the band played patriotic anthems.

"A change must come," one of the cronies at a corner table said to his friend from Tempelhof.

"The Nazis are coming," the other one commented.

"I am not so sure," the first speaker answered. "The Bolshies are strong, and they are cunning."

In Wedding the ambulance picked up a score of wounded men in the street. If the victim was a Bolshevik he would say he had been attacked by a tall man with blond hair and blue eyes. If he was a Nazi he would say his assailant was a short man with curly black hair and a long nose. They did not know it was not the truth they said, because in the nocturnal skirmishes they were fighting not men of blood and flesh but abstractions, conceived in the welter of words.

The Reichstag had refused its endorsement of Chancellor



Brüning's financial measures and it was dissolved. New elections were fixed for the middle of September. The conflict was now carried to the electorate: did it authorize Heinrich Brüning to carry on the business of the Reich in an orderly manner, or did it authorize anarchy to be let loose in the country? The Chancellor had no doubt that the Germans, trained in respect for authority, would continue to give him their confidence, and Hitler was convinced that the Germans, disgusted with authority, would give their vote to him.

The Nazis whipped their campaign into a frenzy. "This will be an American whirlwind campaign," Hitler said, and he spoke at three meetings a day—for hours at each of them. He made no bones about his object, to capture parliament in order to disrupt it.

"The Jew is the enemy," Hitler said. "The Marxian movement is a parody. . . . Economic problems are of secondary importance. World history teaches that nations do not rise and fall on account of economic problems. They die because their races are corroded."

"Generalities," answered a Socialist speaker. "Herr Hitler's stock in trade is made up of Jews and Marxians. Since he knows nothing about economic problems, he thinks they are of no importance."

"Herr Hitler makes ignorance a virtue," a prominent Democratic candidate commented. "Have our fast ocean liners and airships been built on talks about Judaism and Marxism, or are they the result of hard practical thinking?"

Dr. Göbbels in Berlin carried on a whirlwind campaign with countless meetings in taverns. His hands on his hips,



immobile and vitriolic, he seconded Hitler's thoughts on a somewhat higher plane. A docile pupil young Göbbels had turned out to be, in many ways surpassing his master. He understood economic problems and was not afraid to speak about them. He was an uncomfortable fellow for Hitler to have around—Göbbels had great ambitions—but he was an excellent organizer. He quoted facts and figures about the republican mismanagement of twelve years, and while his statistical information was not always above reproach or bias, Michael Spiessbürger liked to listen to its massive music.

The Bolsheviks did their best to out-thunder the Nazis. They had countless speakers, fanatics and shrewd politicians, and their views were often as perverted as their information. They put up a good show, however, and they brought some spice into the saltless life of the proletarians of Moabit.

The Socialists carried on their campaign in the same sedate, petty-bourgeois manner which had become their characteristic trait since power beckoned to them from the ruins of imperial Germany. They relied on the strength of their party organizations and refused to take Hitler too seriously.

The middle parties, unable to follow the *tempo* of the extremists, resigned themselves to a quiet campaign, leaving to the electorate the decision between the shouters and the doers. The Democrats, allied with the Young German Order, conducted scholarly meetings at which high authorities discussed great ideas. There was always a handful of people to attend their meetings.

"The National Socialist March on Berlin Has Begun," the Hitler papers announced triumphantly after the election which took place on September 14. The Reichstag of Berlin



was invaded by 107 Hitlerite deputies, dressed in brown breeches and in brown shirts. Seven years after the attempted *coup d'état* in Munich the vanguard of Hitler's forces appeared in Berlin. Hitler led his men into the legislature but he had no seat there. He was still a man without a country, although rumour had it that Dr. Frick, the Minister in Thuringia, had conferred German citizenship on him some time before.

"Ecce homo," hysterical Nazi editors wrote.

"Adolf Hitler's stars show the same combination as Napoleon's," a sympathizer, conversant with the secrets of astrology, declared.

Nazi newspapers recalled a night in the field hospital after Hitler had been wounded. He had dreamt that he had snatched the German banner from weaker hands and led the army to victory.

A male edition of the Maid of Orleans had appeared, ready to lead all true Teutons to the coronation of the king. A new Moses had come to lead his nation to the Promised Land. Not a Jewish Moses, to be sure, and not a naïve Moses either who would permit Providence to cheat him out of his birthright to the Land of Canaan. This Moses would be the Man of Revenge and the Angel of Retribution.

Germany was thunderstruck and sad, except for the jubilation of over six million Nazi voters. If on the night of September 15, 1930, Adolf Hitler had placed a dozen machine guns on Berlin's Potsdamer Platz, on Alexander Platz and a few more strategic points, no one knows what would have happened. An Italian sociologist, Signor Malaparte, says that nothing would have happened. Hitler could not then or later capture Berlin and Germany because he had forgotten



or had been unable to smash the Socialist Trade Union organizations which could have stopped his advance if he had tried to follow up his victory at the polls by making an attempt to chase the government out of Berlin.

But some of the Nazi underlings were of a different opinion. They passed disparaging remarks about Hitler's tardiness and blamed his Austrian negligence for failing to obtain control of the State machine.

The following day there was almost a panic on the Berlin Bourse. The Reichsbank was forced to part with many barrels of gold in order to keep up the mark quotation. Foreign currencies reflected the uneasiness of the world about the outcome of the elections. In one day, the President of the Reichsbank estimated, $1\frac{1}{2}$ billion marks had been withdrawn from the German market. Switzerland put up an embargo against German gold and made depositors pay interest on their money to the bank. The passport offices of German police headquarters were crowded with anxious people, wanting to get out of the country before the Nazi threat should be fulfilled and heads should begin to roll.

The news was flashed to all parts of the globe and it created consternation almost everywhere. This may mean, the world thought, a new departure in history. The world war would now be fought out on French territory anew. The skeletons nicely tucked away in their cupboards would tumble out of their hiding places and would perform a *danse macabre*, such as civilized humanity had never seen. Once the Germans took to civil war, some foreign soothsayers feared, they would do it so thoroughly that in comparison the Russian terror would be a child's play.



While the spotlight was concentrated on Hitler's spectacular gains few people took the trouble to analyse the figures. Those who did were not likely to share the gloomy forebodings, at least for the moment. They noticed that the Socialists still retained 143 members in the Reichstag and that the entire Marxist representation, including the Communists, comprised 220 deputies, who would offer strenuous resistance to their bitter enemies, the reactionaries.

Nor did it occur to many in the first excitement that out of the 576 Reichstag deputies only about 150 could be said to be prepared for a Nationalist adventure. Nothing worse had happened than that out of a voting population of 36,000,000, some 6,500,000 had expressed their preference for the Hitler brand of salvation. The change did not portend more than a return to 1924 conditions, with the difference that the place of Alfred Hugenberg, the Nationalist chieftain, had been taken by Adolf Hitler, head of the National Socialists.

As the days passed and nothing happened the crowds in the passport offices of police headquarters began to thin, and those who already had their passports began to realize that it would be just as safe for them to stay in Berlin. Hitler was not preparing a Massacre of St. Bartholomew. The French were not mobilizing their armies, nor did they drop bombs on the capital of the Reich. Wall Street, the German Fascists' pet bogey, did not die of the shock.

The question has been often asked why Hitler did not take power by force after September 14, 1930? Psychologically a putsch would have been then much better prepared than at the time of his beer-hall adventure in 1923. In the Autumn of 1930 the anti-Hitler population was prepared for



everything. So great was the shock attending the announcement of immense Nazi gains at the polls that swift action on Hitler's part could have made use of the republican public's bewildered incredulity.

Yet, Hitler did not move, because he realized that he would be more successful in opposition than at the helm. He had become a man of whom millions spoke with amazed interest. Outside of the government he loomed large and to the timid he may even have appeared formidable. But what could he do in the government? Against a hostile majority he could not have carried out his promises. He had a programme, it is true, but it was a programme for vote-catching and not for the serious consideration of statesmen. Besides, would his oratorical powers be as much admired when he had to sit all day at a desk instead of haranguing multitudes in Berlin's Sportpalast and Munich's Zirkus Krone?

Hitler believes he is a great statesman and he has no doubts that he would make a successful dictator. But he must have felt that even if he had succeeded in seizing the power he would have encountered more opposition than an outsider would suspect. As Emil Ludwig has pointed out repeatedly, Germany seems to have lost her revolutionary *élan*. Her last revolution took place four hundred years ago and then it was called Reformation. The uprising of 1848 was the echo of momentous events elsewhere. What actually happened in 1918 was not that the revolution chased away the princes, but that the princes ran away from the revolution.

The dramatic tension which results in revolutions was not characteristic of the Reich of late 1930. Although misery was widespread and discontent with the peace dictates



was general, the belief did not prevail that the government was in dishonest or incompetent hands. Even Chancellor Brüning's worst enemies could not question his ability and integrity. Hitler knew that, given Germany's key position in the capitalistic system, the existing order could not be overthrown. Against those who had tried to persuade him to pattern his conduct on that of Mussolini or of the hated enemy, Lenin, he could answer that conditions in Italy and in Russia had been fundamentally different from those of Germany. In Italy the power of the Socialist Trade Unions had been confined to a few industrial cities in the north. As soon as those unions were smashed the road to Rome was free. As to the Russia of Alexander Kerensky, it had obeyed Petrograd's orders because there was no one else to give commands. As soon as a government presented itself, the provisional government had to go.

Hitler was not allowed to forget after his victory at the polls that quiescent though they seemed to be, the Socialists of Germany were watching him closely. Nor did he forget that the Socialist Party of Germany was a disciplined expression of the will of an important section of the nation and not a mere fly-by-night organization. In March 1920 Wolfgang Kapp rode into Berlin and occupied the government offices by putting up a few machine guns on the Potsdamer Platz and at the Votiv Kirche. The Socialists remained silent—too silent for Herr Kapp, self-styled Chancellor of the Reich, to permit him to sleep quietly in the Renaissance rooms of the Chancellery. Kapp was forced, because of this silence, to leave the capital as fast as he had come.

"Brüning must resign," ordered the *Völkischer Beobachter*



in flaming red letters after the election, but the Chancellor did not take his orders from the Nazi press. That Brüning's party was in a minority and that he must draw the consequences of the *dies iræ* at the polls was Hitler's favourite theme to his audience at the Zirkus Krone which received him with tumultuous acclaim. Before this enthusiastic audience Hitler felt at home and he was more eloquent and more convincing than ever before in demonstrating that because nearly 20 per cent of the Reich's electorate had voted for his candidates he had a mandate to take matters into his hands.

Ten days after the election Hitler stood before the Supreme Court of the Reich in Leipzig and loud-speakers carried his voice to thousands who had stormed the building and failed to obtain admission. This was the trial of three Reichswehr officers who had joined the National Socialist Party and who stood accused of aiding and abetting an outlaw movement. Hitler was to be heard as a witness and he was to tell Germany under oath what his party meant to do.

Once more the passport bureaux of police headquarters were crowded. Through those loud-speakers in the Supreme Court of the Reich the word might come for a Nazi rising. Hitler would not tolerate sentence being passed on three young Reichswehr officers for belonging to a party which over six million German voters had endorsed.

Hitler spoke and Germany was amazed.

"There will come a time," Hitler said, "when our ideas can no longer be kept a secret from the world. Out of forty million Germans of voting age thirty-five millions will be behind us and they will know what they want and what we can give them."



This was equivalent to saying that Hitler, the arch-conspirator, would wait until 90 per cent of Germany's voters would give him their confidence before he would assume the power. After the surprising result of September 14, Hitler gave the Reich another shock. If he had been a stage manager working up climaxes he could not have arranged things better—or worse.

"Our 107 mandates," he continued, "will be increased to 250, and we shall have the absolute majority. My opponents have only one interest: to prove that our movement is inimical to the interests of the State. They try to discredit me because they know I want to conquer the State with legal means."

This was not the voice of a dictator, but of a poor mathematician who did not know that 90 per cent of some 600 seats in the Reichstag was not 250 seats.

"And what about the heads that will roll under the reign of the Third Reich?" the president of the court wanted to know. Those heads had always played an important part in Hitler's speeches, and they never failed to evoke stormy applause.

"After our victory is complete," Hitler answered with some heat, "there will be a new Supreme Court and it will visit retribution on the crime of 1918. Then heads *will* roll."

Back again in Munich, Hitler was not displeased with his appearance in Leipzig. His words were heralded across the earth as the *pronunciamiento* of a Man of Destiny. He hoped to be offered the chancellorship and waited for the call. A year before he said to friends: "I am forty, and I must come to power." He was now forty-one and showing his age.



THE NAZIS ARE COMING

CSL

There were silver threads in his brown hair. What would be the sense of his becoming the Chancellor of the Reich when he was old, aching all over, and unable to enjoy the pomp of power without wondering how long his life would last?



CHAPTER X

THE OSAF

NEAR the village of Löwenburg, some few miles from Berlin, there is a lake and near it a mill at the entrance of a sloping patch of woods. In the Spring night the lake lies without stirring in the dark frame of linden trees and the moon pours a heavenful of silver on the water and on the sails of the windmill as they gently turn. Here is a bit of the world that dreams in shining peace.

Of a sudden, the moon sails under the summit of a cloud, and half a dozen dark figures come from the woods toward the mill. The moon again sends serene rays across the sleepy land, and the dark figures halt until it disappears again. Then they resume their stealthy march.

Is this the Walpurgis Night of which children dream? Are these ghosts looking for the familiar landmarks of their early life?

One of them speaks in a quiet voice :

“ Parole ? ”

And the other one answers :

“ Hitler.”

The shadows move on, and out of the mill a man runs, in a soldier's uniform, headed toward the village in which now dogs give a riotous concert. Lights, as small as fire-flies, are flashed in peasant windows. The heavy thump of



HITLER GREETES THE FLAGS OF THE S.A.

*Courtesy of European Picture Service, New York
(European Syndicating Prohibited)*



marching feet sounds in the distance like the throb of a giant's heart. The mill has come to life.

"Parole?"

"Hitler."

The muffled noise of marching feet comes closer. The moon pours its silver on a cloud of dust stirred up by hundreds of human legs.

"We'll be there soon."

"Na, hoffentlich."

These are not the whispers of phantoms but the harsh sound of the Berlin dialect. The men are tired from the march all afternoon in the warm May day.

"Donnerwetter," exclaims one of the young men, whose face is smooth and his legs sturdy.

"What's wrong?" his companion asks. "The dust is good for your lungs and cleans the arteries."

"Deploy," comes the command. "Enemy on top of the wooded hill to the right. Patrol, march!"

The men deploy on both sides of the road and crouch behind their knapsacks with bated breath. Five men set out to climb the other slope, but they stand motionless when the moon comes out.

Meanwhile new men have come and thrown themselves on the ground at a word of command. They wear brown uniforms and on their collar there is the sign of the swastika.

Around the table lit up by the yellowish light of a small electric bulb men in uniforms sit in the mill and study a map dotted with tiny flags.

"Verflucht," the young man with the boyish face exclaims behind his knapsack in the fields, "a thistle has hurt



my finger." He looks angrily at the drop of blood trembling on his finger-tip.

"Vorwärts !" comes the command and the young man with the drop of blood jumps to his feet and dashes ahead.

The night is pierced by a triumphant shout. The invaders on the hill-top have been surrounded and are taken prisoners. Captors and captives march down the hillside, green leaves on their caps, singing at the top of their voices.

"Attention ! Der Osaf !" a voice sputters.

On a mound of earth stands the "Osaf," in a brown uniform, his collar brocaded with gold ; in his hand a riding whip. There are two tufts of moustache under his nose and in the light of the moon his hair looks almost blond.

It is the Osaf, Adolf Hitler. He is surrounded by his army staff : young men aspiring to military fame, and elderly men who had been high army officers. The Osaf gives his view of the night's manœuvre. Although he criticizes the execution of the plans, one can see that he is proud of his sturdy soldiers.

"The Nazi shock troops are Germany's spearhead against Jewish Marxism and capitalism," he declares. "With the selfless work of the troops the Nazi cause is assured."

In front of the mill to which the staff retires there is a sign. "Do not approach the mill ! Danger of death !" On the sign the Nazi flag is painted.

The shock troops retire for a rest. To-morrow will be Sunday and the village of Löwenberg will entertain the week-end troops of Adolf Hitler.

* * * * *



The Nazi army, estimated toward the end of 1931 at 80,000 men, and described by Hitler as a spearhead against Marxism, consists to a certain extent of proletarians, sometimes Marxists. Unemployed men cannot do better than join the Nazi ranks where they have free week-end amusement and sometimes a little extra money.

Adolf Hitler is the Supreme Shock Troop Commander, "Oberster Sturm Abteilung Führer," hence the name of "Osaf." He is assisted by a general staff of officers, many of whom filled important places during the world war. Germany is divided into five Sturm Abteilung inspections, at the heads of which stand five deputy Osafs. This extra-legal semi-military force of a political party is said to be reaching for the laurels of the Fascist militia before the march on Rome. It is an aggressive corps, the offshoot of the usher service which Hitler had established in Munich to protect the National Labour Party meetings from hecklers and irruptions.

Although the Nazi army is Fascist by inspiration, its structure reminds one of the regular German army. The inspections are divided into brigades, and the brigades into "Gausturms," which correspond to the army divisions.

The regiment in the Nazi language is called "Standarte," and like the legion of ancient Rome it is entitled to its own banner. The "Trupp" is the equivalent of the company and the smallest Nazi SA. unit is the "Gruppe," consisting of a small band of men, 3 to 15, and usually hands in the same factory.

Above the shock troops rank the picked legions, known as the "Schutzstaffel," briefly the SS.—the protective cohorts. Their official function is to protect the Nazi assemblies against



intruders. Their unofficial function is to serve as intelligence departments in civil war. The smaller Nazi officials consider them the private army of Adolf Hitler, hired to keep an eye on party lieutenants and their underlings.

To be an SS. man is a great distinction, something like membership in the prætorian guards must have been in Imperial Rome. The men of the SS. must be between 23 and 35. They must have been for three years members of the party and for at least one year members of the shock troops. They are responsible to the "Ossf," "Oberster Schutzstaffel Führer." This part of the Nazi army would show its teeth if one of the lieutenants made an attempt to displace Hitler or should try to engineer a palace revolution.

Hitler regulates not only the march but also the conduct of his young men. His ideas about discipline are strict and his words are peremptory. Memories of the Prussian goose-step still haunt the headquarters of the Osaf. This is an introduction to one of his orders :

"Order of march : group columns of five or six, according to special instructions. Gruf marching in line on the right wing, while Truf marches ahead of the right wing. The Staf, Brif and Obf march six steps ahead of the Strumpf. The band and the drummers march six steps ahead of them."

Gruf, Truf, Staf, Brif, Obf, Strumpf are titles of the military dignitaries whom Hitler has brought into being to realize the Third Realm.

"It has come to my attention," another order says, "that several shock troopers have their lunches on credit in a restaurant. I declare that this conduct is incompatible with



the dignity of a National Socialist. The debts should be settled without delay !”

How much credence may be given to Hitler's assertion that the shock and protective troops do not aim at the forcible overthrow of the present regime and the establishment of a military dictatorship? The Osaf's orders are that a member of the German Fascist army caught in possession of firearms is to be dismissed. At the trial in Leipzig of three Reichswehr officers charged with high treason Hitler stated under oath that the troops had no designs on the existence of the government in power.

While Hitler has thus affirmed the purity of his intentions, his underlings, who owe him unquestioning allegiance, have belied his asseverations. Dr. Göbbels still maintains in his belligerent party organ, *Angriff*, that a revolution is needed to cleanse impurity with blood and iron. Colonel Constantin Hierl, a military expert of the party, quotes Mussolini in a pamphlet published by the National Socialist Party : “ Blood alone moves the wheels of history.” The same authority claims party backing for his statement : “ There is only one impartial judge above the nations, and that is success. Divine justice awards the right to the stronger.”

Left-wing radical foes maintain that Hitler's followers are trying to apply these principles to the domestic problems of the Reich. In one year alone, Nazi firearms and rubber sticks, not to speak of their special boxing rings, are said to have been responsible for the death of over a hundred political opponents.

The same radical foes maintain that while Hitler perorates about his peaceful intentions his lieutenants have built up



an underground "railway" to spirit out of Germany the shock troopers responsible for the loss of lives. The main stations of the railway are said to be the Nazi army headquarters and the ultimate destination of the culprits is said to be Austrian Tyrol, where Captain von Maltitz, a German Fascist, had welcomed the fugitives to comparative safety until Austria put him out of business.

Other opponents, on the other hand, agree that the terror of the Hitler army has shown abatement which they ascribe to the party's financial backers who want it to embark on less turbulent waters. According to their version, the Nazi shock troops are no longer needed to oppose the so-called Marxist terror because Herr Brüning, in his unassuming way, has already neutralized the Socialist menace. Why throw more money into a military organization that shows indications of developing into the phantom which the pro-Nazi industrialists had set out to kill?

In the late Summer of 1930, the Nazi shock troops in Berlin revolted and the affair developed into one of those incidents which gave Hitler an opportunity to show himself in his true colours. The Nazi officers were disgruntled because they had not received their share of candidacies at the forthcoming Reichstag elections. The rank and file were dissatisfied with their inadequate pay. They sent a deputation to Dr. Göbbels, the Berlin leader, and he answered them with an affront. They sent another deputation to Hitler in Munich, but the Osaf did not want to see them. Then the men returned to Berlin, began quietly to wreck the furniture of headquarters and issued a manifesto.

The shock troops, the manifesto said, were staking their



lives for the cause, while the leaders rode in sumptuous motor cars.

“A large number of our party members,” they went on complaining, “are factory owners who come to our meetings in large private cars because they hope we will protect their money bags. They are mistaken. The workers of the fist and of the head will not be cheated out of their Socialistic birthright which for Herr Göbbels is a means and not the end. Our liberation from domestic and foreign capital is our aim. . . .”

For the first time, the underdogs of the party made their words heard and insisted on their rights. This was a dangerous precedent and Hitler took the first train for Berlin. He pleaded with the men, stormed and wept, but did not break their resistance. The troopers had known of Hitler's tearful arguments and they had fortified their hearts in advance. They went out, smashed the headlights of a car they thought was Hitler's, came back and clamoured for justice.

Finally, Hitler yielded on all lines. He rushed back to Munich and issued a ukase. He gave orders that the officers should advance more rapidly and that the men should be given more pay.

“I order . . . I order . . . I order . . .” the Supreme Commander of all German Fascists dictated, and the men in Berlin had a quiet laugh.



CHAPTER XI

“GERMANY AWAKE! JUDA PERISH!”

IN its Preamble, the National Socialist Programme says that it was made for all times and that it is unalterable. Adolf Hitler, who regards the Nazi movement as his life work, takes responsibility for the programme, although his part in its creation was mostly passive. His was a work of selection. The ideas he liked he accepted and those he disliked he rejected. In considering the man's work it is impossible to leave the guiding principles of his party out of account.

Although the programme is described as unalterable, many of its 25 articles have undergone radical changes in interpretation, and although the Nazi party is an absolute dictatorship, all of Hitler's lieutenants have their views as to what the movement should stand for. In the maze of conflicting views it is not always easy to find the party's real programme. In the following pages an attempt will be made to present the consensus of opinion—so far as it exists—among the leaders, indicating the issues on which their ideas are fundamentally different.

The popular mind has epitomized the party programme in the slogan: “Deutschland erwache! Juda verrecke!” (“Germany awake! Juda perish!”)

On the platform, in the Press, in the legislative work of the



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Nazis, the Jewish question occupies the forefront of their attention.

“The word Aryan,” Hitler says, “stands for work, nobility and unselfishness, while the name Jew means lack of self-sacrifice. . . . The most important cause of Germany’s collapse is a lack of appreciation of the race problem and, especially, of the Jewish menace.”

“Anti-Semitism,” Gottfried Feder, the lawgiver-in-chief of the party, wrote, “is to a certain extent the sentimental foundation of our movement.” Then he went on explaining :

“Every National Socialist is an anti-Semite but not every anti-Semite is a National Socialist.”

The Nazi must aim higher than a mere anti-Semite, Hitler and Feder teach. - He must hate the Jew collectively,—not only the individual but also the eternal Jew. “Cherchez le juif,” is their motto.

“Only members of our own race may be citizens,” the Nazi programme says. “Our own people are those of German blood, irrespective of religion. No Jew, therefore, may be a member of our people. Non-citizens may live in Germany only as guests, under the rule of alien laws. Only citizens have the right to select leaders and legislate. We demand that all public offices in the Reich, in the States and municipalities shall be filled with our own citizens.”

All non-Germans—another name for Jews—who have come to Germany since August 1, 1914, are to be expelled.

“On each telegraph pole from Munich to Berlin the head of a prominent Jew must be displayed,” the other Nazi lawgiver, Alfred Rosenberg, the Baltic nobleman with the Jewish name, wrote in his *Myth of the Twentieth Century*.



Hermann Esser, author of the *Jewish World Press*, took up the cudgels against those who maintain that the Jews, too, are men.

“Indians and Hottentots, not to speak of the cannibals of the South Sea Islands,” he wrote, “are also men, and yet it would not occur to anyone to suggest them as Ministers of the Interior or Burgomasters. It should not be forgotten that even cannibals and Hottentots are a thousand times more likable than the monsters who believe in all earnestness that they are called upon to devour all the nations of the earth.”

The Press, the party programme says, must be purged of Jewish influence. All members of the staff of German-language papers must be Germans, in other words, non-Jews. Newspapers that do not conform to these requirements must be printed in a foreign language. *The Berliner Tageblatt* and the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, two heavyweight champions of the German Press, would have to be printed in Hebrew letters under the Nazi rule.

From the National Socialist Liberty Party the Nazis have inherited a detailed programme, discussed at length in the campaign literature.

All Semites, these recommendations say, must be entered in the Register of Jews. All official documents dealing with them must bear the designation “Jew,” and all documents dealing with former Jews must bear the designation “Christian Jew.” All those whose ancestors belonged to the Jewish community until the issue of the Jewish Edict of Prussia in 1812 must be considered Jews, even though their official religion is Christian.

Jewish physicians would be forbidden, under these



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recommendations, to treat non-Jewish patients. The Jewish Sabbath would have to be celebrated on Sunday. Not less than five years in prison would be the punishment of any Jew conveying information of an intended raising or depressing of security prices by secret signs or by word of mouth. The possessions of such person would be confiscated for the benefit of the State, in so far as their wealth would not be employed for the repayment of losses to their victims. Jews would be prohibited from assuming Christian names. They would be provided with special baths. Taxes on Jews would be twice the amounts paid by Christians.

In order to preserve the purity of German blood and, especially, to preserve it from Jewish contamination, Gustave Darré suggests in his book about the *New Nobility of the Blood and Soil* (“Neuadel aus Blut und Boden”), which has Hitler’s sanction, the establishment of a chain of human thoroughbred offices. Marriage licences, under his plan, will be issued by government inspectors only after a thorough biological, dermatological and gynæcological investigation. As a protection for race purity, German women will be divided into four “blood classes.” Every woman must wear her class emblem so that deceptions may be prevented.

The first class will comprise women who are flawless from the point of view of race. They are fit mates of the “blood nobility” of the Third Reich. The nobility will be forbidden to marry any girl not in the first class. Herr Darré estimates that about 10 per cent of the Reich’s female population will be qualified to be wives of Fascist noblemen.

Girls of the second class, while of good blood, must be under observation for a specified time. After quarantine



they may be found acceptable for marrying noblemen. Their marriage licences will be issued from the office, where they will be kept under strict control.

The fate of girls of the third class will be very sad. They are those whose blood is not above reproach, although they may be flawless physically and intellectually. They may be married only to low-class males, and the marriage must be childless. The men marrying them must submit to sterilization before receiving their marriage licence.

Women in the fourth class are forbidden to marry. It is not quite clear whether this interdiction is inflicted upon them because of pollution with French or Jewish blood.

"It is not surprising," two Socialist authors commented on Hitlerism, "that Adolf Hitler has gathered such a large following around himself, since his partisans have to learn nothing more than the sentence: 'Kill the Jew.'"

These followers must have been disappointed when Hitler, after the windows of Jewish merchants had been smashed in Unter den Linden in the course of a Nazi demonstration at the opening of the Reichstag in Berlin, denied that his strong men had had anything to do with it. Their disappointment must have been even greater when in an interview for the *Times* Hitler declared: "Against honest Jews I have nothing to say."

The economic policy of the party is closely connected with its anti-Jewish programme. Gottfried Feder's great discovery, which made a profound impression on Hitler when he joined the German Labour Party, was the distinction between the "schaffendes" and "raffendes" capital. The "schaffendes," creative, capital is employed in constructive industrial work,



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while the “raffendes,” grasping, capital is amassed in banks. The former is the Aryan capital and it smells sweetly in the nostrils, while the latter is Semitic capital, and it is repellent.

“The struggle against international finance and loan capital,” Hitler said, “has become the most important incident of Germany’s war for freedom and independence.”

Commenting on this statement, Gottfried Feder remarked :

“All true Nationalists share this conviction. The solution of the problem entails an answer to the Jewish question in the field of intellect.” This is Feder’s way of saying that the economic programme of the National Socialist Party is dictated by racial considerations.

Money, the orthodox National Socialist holds, is tainted with Judaism. So are the banks and financial institutions,—the fortresses of robber barons. The cancer has penetrated so deep that, in Feder’s view, there would be enough “mixed Germans” in the Reich even after the expulsion of the Jews—a thoroughbred German would be incapable of such appalling deeds—to take over the banks vacated by the Jews and to ravage the population in the way of their predecessors. Adolf Hitler would not be surprised to see even so-called anti-Semites in the places of the Jewish “robber barons.”

Hitler and most of his lieutenants are Socialists only so far as Jewish capital is concerned, but they are Nationalists in regard to Aryan capital. The party’s socialism is ancillary to its racial policies and expresses no more deep-seated conviction than the slogan, “Juda verrecke !”

In line with this policy, Alfred Rosenberg, editor of Hitler’s own *Völkischer Beobachter*, demands that the stock



exchanges and banks shall be nationalized. This demand is also an important article in Feder's economic faith. Yet it was Feder who, upon Hitler's orders, informed the Reichstag that a sound system of private banking could on certain conditions promote the interests of national economy. This was after Hitler had met two outstanding Jewish bankers, and, presumably, discussed with them the financial problems of his party.

Gold standard and similar other trifles would not be in the way of the Nazis making Germany happy. The Fascist Treasury would have the right to issue non-interest-bearing bills to finance national works, such as highways, waterways and public buildings. The money to be thus issued under the auspices of a Building and Economy Bank would have no gold covering. The collateral of the new money would be the buildings and highways, so that as long as construction material was available, the money printing presses could turn out uncounted billions in the best manner of after-war inflation.

The "unalterable" party programme was clear in its demand that "trusts should be nationalized and the profits of the large concerns should be distributed." This was unmitigated Bolshevism and the denial of private property. Subsequently Herr Hitler explained that what the programme meant was that "large industrial plants should be nationalized in case they failed to fulfil their national obligations," which is exactly the thing the programme did not mean, because if it had meant it, it would have said so.

"In contrast with the capitalistic and Marxian systems," Herr Feder said, "the National Socialist State will enable every worker to have his private property. The condition of



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owning property will be, however, the fulfilment of certain obligations toward the commonwealth.”

The same thought has been expressed by Hitler in fewer words: “We want to abolish the proletariat.”

Mussolini has contributed his share to the solution of the future Nazi State by his corporative system. “Professional guilds” of employers and employees will regulate the wage policy of the Third Empire. Under Hitler’s rule there will be no industrial disputes or strikes.

Through the “Economic Chambers” the State will take an interest in production. The Chambers will consist of financially independent men on whom it will be incumbent to analyse and control the work of the guilds. At the same time, it will be their duty to create new markets for the domestic products at home and abroad.

Unemployment would be unknown in the Nazi State. There would be a compulsory civil service of one year for young people, which would take half a million job-seekers out of the labour market. Besides, there would be a drastic reduction of imports of foodstuffs, so that another million unemployed might be placed on German farms. Finally, the import of certain industrial products would be prohibited altogether, thereby creating work for an additional army of hundreds of thousands.

No explanation has been given by the party chieftains how youth’s compulsory service would reduce the reserve army of the proletariat. Nor has any suggestion been offered how Germany’s isolation from the rest of the world would affect her exports and general prosperity.

Dr. Joseph Göbbels, the Nazi leader in Berlin, whose



word carries much weight in certain parts of Germany, outlined a Bolshevik programme when he said :

“Germany has practically no capital except in the form of shares kept in the vaults of Jewish banks in London and New York. If we had a real German State it would treat all shares held in Jewish banks as null and void,—mere scraps of paper.”

Göbbels has given help toward an understanding of the Nazi economic policy in saying : “We are neither capitalists nor proletarians.” For the sake of greater clarity he might have added : “We do not know what we are.”

Abolition of all income acquired without work or trouble and of the “interest servitude” (Zinsknechtschaft) had been other cardinal interests of the Nazi leaders until they began to feel less enthusiastic about them. This part of the National Socialist programme is extremely vague. We shall see in another chapter how the German Fascists have approached the problem of interest.

When the Nazis demand that the big stores shall be outlawed and rented to small shopkeepers, the world knows they do so because they are demagogues making a bid for the votes of thousands of small tradesmen who see their worst enemies in the large warehouses of Berlin's West End. And the world knows that Herr Hitler and his friends will forget all about this part of their programme as soon as they have even a remote chance of carrying it into effect.

The economic programme of the Nazis is a medley of ill-digested socialistic, capitalistic, and Italian fascistic doctrines. It is subjected to too many changes to deserve the name of “party programme.”



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An abundance of reckless promises characterizes that part of the Nazi programme which deals with the agrarian question. The peasants of Eastern Prussia want a piece of land and a decent place to live in, while their masters, descendants in spirit of hard Teutonic knights, want the tillers of the soil to live in their present dependence and ignorance. In many parts of Pomerania, Masurenland and Ermland the feudal age lives on. The peasants take off their caps to the noblemen, bow to them and await their commands. These are the strongholds of Nazidom,—the manors of the mighty whose names end with a Slavic “ow” or “itz.” Many of these nobles are just as little German as Adolf Hitler, and they are just as intransigent German patriots.

In order to gratify these conflicting interests, Hitler has two agrarian programmes, one for the landowners and another for the landless proletariat.

“We demand an agrarian reform consistent with our national needs,” the Nazi programme says, “a law for the nationalization of land without compensation in the interest of the common weal, the abolition of mortgage interest, and the prevention of land speculation.”

This proposal has been emasculated in almost every essential detail through the following interpretation:

“Since the National Socialist Party stands for private property, it is natural that the provision for ‘expropriation without compensation’ should refer mainly to the creation of legal means for the acquisition of land bought illegally or not cultivated in the interest of the community. The provision is directed primarily against the Jewish land speculator companies.”



Even this interpretation, however, must have appeared too radical to Hitler. Subsequently, he declared that the State had to acquire land only against compensation. Theoretically, the Nazis hold, the land belongs to the State and the community transfers it to farmers to be exploited for the benefit of all. In accordance with this policy, the State has the right of pre-emption and it has an exclusive right to grant mortgages.

Hitler has nothing to say against the accumulation of vast properties in the hands of a few Prussian magnates, and Herr Feder had the blessing of the party chieftain in writing :

“Large estates have their necessary functions and they are entirely justified in a certain ratio with small and middle holdings.”

To the exclusion of more important subjects, Herr Hitler dotes lovingly on the cheap fertilizer he will give the German farmer under Nazi rule. He is in his element when he can promise the blessings he will shower on Germany's land proletariat. The landless peasant of Eastern Prussia, who shares his clay hut with a pig and several chickens, will reside in the glory of a three-room apartment and will receive a part of the produce of the soil. He will work only ten hours a day and he may rise on the social ladder to land inspectorship.

One of the economic provisions of the programme is fraught with special danger for millions if the Nazis ever come to power.

“Offenders against the interests of the community, usurers, profiteers, etc.,” the article says, “are to be punished with death, irrespective of race and religion.”



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One would not like to be punished with death for being
“etc.”

For a picture of Germany's great economic problems it is in vain that one turns to the Nazi leaders. Ferdinand Fried—the name is a pseudonym—has been the only National Socialist so far to give a vivid picture of the Reich's tragic plight toward the close of 1931 and to make some suggestions which his party friends might do well to heed. Sixteen million Germans, Fried says in his *Das Ende des Kapitalismus*, earned less than the equivalent of £5 a month in the second half of 1931, and another sixteen millions earned less than £10, not to speak of the millions who had to live on a few pence of daily dole. His figures show that 4 per cent of Germany's population owned all the real estate, while 96 per cent owned nothing.

The inequality of wealth entails a catastrophic reduction of domestic consuming capacity, according to Fried. He finds it useless, therefore, to build up monster plants in the Ruhr. These products would have to be sent abroad. Against the German industrial invasion foreign countries would have to protect themselves by raising their tariffs higher. In turn, German manufacturers would have to reduce their costs, including wages, so that the Reich would be inhabited by white slaves working for others without adequate compensation.

Hitler is calling on the wage- and salary-earners to desert their Marxist leaders and rally to his flag. What his flag stands for he has never revealed beyond irresponsible generalizations and decrepit platitudes. Gottfried Feder has declared in his name that the National Socialist Party has three



enemies : Marxism, parliamentarism, and capitalism. Hitler calls his party a representative body of labour. In other countries such representative bodies are called company unions, and they are financed by the companies whose workers they are supposed to represent. We shall see later that, to a certain extent, this criterion applies to the National Socialist movement as well.

The same confusion prevails in the political part of the Nazi programme. Such vital issues as the form of the government have been left out of consideration.

“A good republic is better than a bad monarchy, and a good monarchy is better than a bad republic,” Dr. Göbbels said, and Hitler has subscribed to his dictum.

The Koran of the National Socialist Party, the unalterable Programme, has no provisions for such questions as democracy and dictatorship. These problems can be solved by each chieftain according to the desires of the audience.

“Progress and human culture,” Hitler said, “are not born of the majority, but of the genius and energy of a real personality.”

The real personality is, of course, Adolf Hitler. Out of his head the idea of the National Socialist movement sprang in all its panoplied glory. Hitler shares no honours with anyone in bringing the party to life. He had an inspiration and, lo, the party was there,—one of the most remarkable instances of spontaneous creation through the intercession of superhuman power ever recorded since the time Pallas Athene was born !

Dr. Göbbels says paradoxically that Germany would



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regain her freedom under the yoke of a dictator. Opposition would be punished by bloodshed and the dictatorship would be the crowning achievement of a reign of terror. If half of Germany had to be drowned in blood so much the worse for that half of Germany, but the country must be purged of contamination and the dictator's power must be absolute. Göbbels implies modestly that he could be the dictator. He has no doubt that he would be guided by a pillar of light on the road to Germany's happiness.

Gottfried Feder, the other party augur, who fabricates the ideas that Hitler sells to the public in his harangues, contributes a lyrical effusion to the political *credo* of the movement when he writes :

“The fragrance of Germany's soil fills with happiness the wanderer treading on native ground with which his blood is one . . .”

Rudolf Jung, the party's apostle in Austria, sees Germany's future secured by the adaptation of the Soviet system, which, he asserts, was originally a German invention. He, too, sighs for the “Tatmensch,” the man of deeds, who will kick the alien idea of parliamentary democracy out of the way and will govern with a chain of councils, purified of the Bolshevik taint.

The party literature, which is unusually vague on these questions, abounds with such generalities as : “Our programme means the freedom of the working German nation.”

It is only seldom that we catch a glimpse of Adolf Hitler expressing more lofty aspirations, such as when he vows to make his party the master of the streets.

“We must teach Marxism,” Hitler said, “that the future



ruler of the street is National Socialism, as it will yet be the master of the State.”

Hitler's foreign policy is just as whimsical as his economic and political programmes, with one exception. He has made all Germany reparation-conscious. Alfred Hugenberg and his Nationalists had stormed against the “Dawes tribute” before Hitler's voice was heard, but they compromised when the hour for action came. The Communists, too, had taken a strong stand against reparations as the symbol of the capitalistic regime. The Socialists and the Centre parties, on the other hand, had maintained that war debts had to be paid or else chaos and war would follow. Hitler has changed Germany's mind on the subject. In view of the collapse of the economic system of the Reich in 1930 Germany found that Hitler's antagonism had been justified. The fast *tempo* with which he rolled up millions of votes, while parties with much more sensible programmes and greater experience in government lagged behind, may have been, to a certain degree, his reward for obstinacy on this score.

Much of the foreign programme would be productive of international conflicts. Herr Feder gave expression to this intransigence in the following resolution :

“We do not give up our right to any German in Bohemia's Sudetenland, in Alsace-Lorraine, in Poland, in Austria—which is a colony of the League of Nations—and in all the succession States of imperial Austria. This claim to German territories, however, does not involve any imperialistic tendency. . . .”

An identical keynote is sounded in the National Socialist ditty :



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“Nie wieder Krieg,
Heisst nie wieder Sieg !
Heisst nie wieder frei,
Heisst Sklaverei !”

(No more war,
Victory's bar !
Fettered Germany,
Means new slavery !)

An external hereditary enemy is essential for a militant political organization. Hitler might have revived the Wilhelmian slogan of “Gott strafe England !” Or he could have struck a pose as a new Charlemagne, defending Europe against the Oriental danger and with a dramatic gesture he could have pointed to Russia with the cry : “Here is the enemy !” Finally, he could have preached a crusade against Italy, most typical of the Latin race and civilization which Hitler abominates. Yet, he has not selected any of these nations as the hereditary foe.

“France is Germany's inexorable enemy,” Hitler says. “That nation, sullied with negro blood, represents a constant danger for the white race by identifying itself with the aims of Jewish world domination.”

In the older Nazi literature there were wild sallies against the French Great Masonic Lodge of the Orient which was accused of being behind the French-Jewish unholy alliance directed against the Nordic race.

Although Hitler considers the French an inferior race, he and his cohorts demand in the second article of the party programme “equality of the German people with all other



nations and the consequent abrogation of the Treaties of Versailles and Saint-Germain." The first part of this article might be interpreted to mean that Hitler desires to have Nazi Germany considered as inferior as France.

However, even the fundamental tenet of hatred against the French was punctured when Hitler denied hostile intentions against the French in reply to a query of Gustave Hervé, French Fascist editor of *La Liberté*, as to whether an alliance of awakening Germany and France would not solve some of the most important problems of Europe and the world.

More than one effort has been made on the part of fanatics and shrewd politicians to make this programme the basis of a German national religion. Suggestions have not been wanting to call back the native gods from their exile and to people the heavens with their hosts. The followers of General Ludendorff especially have been known to work in this direction. The official National Socialist Party has not encouraged these seekers of mystical truth. But it has not discouraged the setting up of new ethical standards that have nothing to do with economy, politics and diplomacy. Precepts for a new ethics are scattered all over the writings of the party high-priests. They are particularly numerous in Alfred Rosenberg's *Myth of the Twentieth Century*. We can turn to him for information as to whether under the Third Empire the Germans will retain the present structure of the family.

Rosenberg suggests a compromise between monogamy and polygamy, so that the Reich may fulfil its purpose as a vast incubator of future warriors. The French must not



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have the satisfaction of seeing the German birth-rate decline even though the country will be so crowded that the population will have to live on a daily bowl of rice. Where would Germany be to-day, Rosenberg asks, if in the heroic age of the Teutonic nomads polygamy had not been practised?

“In the Reich of the future,” Rosenberg says, “a childless woman, married or unmarried, will not be considered a full-fledged member of the community. Our view of adultery must, therefore, be revised, so that extra-marital relations with issue shall not be considered a breach of the marriage bond in the legal sense of the word.”

On the woman's problems the Nazis do not waste much time. They settle the question with one sentence:

“Woman, back to the kitchen you go!”

* * * * *

In the beginning, there was the First Empire when brave Hohenstaufen kings battled with the Popes. It was destroyed by Germany's own dissension and was long dead when Napoleon extinguished the ancient title and began to usurp the crown of the Holy Roman Emperors. The Second Empire saw light in the shadow of the walls of Paris when Prussian troops stood guard on the Butte Chaumont. It endured until a stab in its back by criminal hands, as the Nazis say, put an end to its youthful existence. After November 1918 the Reich ceased to be German, in Hitler's view. He is now working to build up the Third German Reich in accordance with the programme outlined above. It will be a more perfect Reich, the Nazis swear, than its pre-



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decessors were, because it will be entirely Germany's own, inhabited by millions of Knights of the Holy Grail. At the head of the Aryan hosts will stand Adolf Hitler, looking grim and severe, with two small tufts of moustache under his nose.



CHAPTER XII

“BY THEIR WORKS . . .”

FOR the last ten years the National Socialists have had parliamentary representation, first under the name of the “Freiheitspartei” and since 1924 under their own name. An analysis of their programme must, therefore, be supplemented by the consideration of their legislative record. Although they have been mostly in a small minority during that time, nothing has prevented them from submitting their proposals to the Reichstag and the State legislatures.

True to the spirit of the party programme, Hitler’s legislative henchmen have been preoccupied with race problems which they like to link up with economic questions.

One of the most outstanding Nazi measures submitted to the Reichstag, known as “Printed Matter No. 1741,” constitutes several new crimes, such as high treason against the race, against the national economy and culture. With subtle irony, Hitler called it a measure for the protection of the republic, and it reads in parts :

“Anyone attacking or even questioning in speech or in the Press the moral value of universal military or other State service, anyone advocating the spiritual, physical or material disarmament of the German nation . . . publicly asserting Germany’s share of war guilt or damaging the vital interests



of the German people in any other way shall be punished with death.

“Anyone consorting with members of the Jewish race shall purge his crime in prison.

“Anyone maligning German national heroes, holders of high orders of bravery, members of the former and present German army, speaking irreverently of the emblems and symbols of national defence, especially of distinctions, uniforms, and flags, shall be flogged and jailed.”

A Nazi project, entitled “A Bill for the Expropriation of the Wealth of the Banking, Stock Exchange Princes, and of other Parasites,” reads as follows :

The entire wealth of Banking and Stock Exchange Princes, of Eastern Jews and other foreigners having immigrated to Germany since August 1, 1914, the wealth of their families and members of families, all increment of wealth due to revolutions, inflations and deflations, shall be expropriated for the benefit of the community without compensation.”

One of the anti-Semitic bills dealt with the entire Jewish race in one sentence :

“All members of the Jewish race shall be placed under a special law.”

Another project was more explicit :

“Members of the Jewish race shall be excluded and dismissed forthwith from all public offices of the Reich, the States, and autonomous municipalities.”

Hitler remembers that the original German Labour Party of which he was the seventh member had been directed partly against brewers accused of profiteering, and he remembers gratefully the assistance of the Munich beer-halls, in the



cellars of which he dreamt himself into politics. A mark of his gratitude was the following resolution :

“The Reichstag shall decide to call on the government of the Reich to prohibit entirely the importation of Pilsen beer both from Czechoslovakia and by way of any other country.”

As late as 1926 the National Socialists advocated forced labour for young men and women, so as to decrease unemployment.

“The government of the Reich,” the resolution says, “shall prepare a law compelling able-bodied and unmarried young persons to perform a year’s labour in view of the catastrophic unemployment situation and in order to help the labour market. . . .”

In the Summer of 1929, when the Nazi agitation against the “Dawes tribute” was at its height, Hitler’s men in the Reichstag proposed resolutions demanding that the Dawes annuities should be employed for the strengthening of the German army and the building up of the navy. Four days after submitting such a resolution they changed their minds and demanded that the unpaid Dawes annuities should be utilized on behalf of the unemployed, the victims of the world war, and of the inflation.

Various devices to break the “interest servitude” have been proposed by Nazi deputies. For some time it had been supposed that the famous “Brechung der Zinsknechtschaft” meant a return to the mediæval religious prohibition of interest on capital. This view, however, had to be dismissed when the National Socialist deputies introduced a resolution calling for the reduction of the interest rate on all debts to



a maximum of 5 per cent, of which at least 1 per cent must be for amortization. If the debt is not paid in fifty years in its entirety the debtor and his heirs are released from their obligation.

In the legislatures the Nazis have kept remarkably quiet about the nationalization of banks, the establishment of their own Building and Economy Institutes, and their pet idea of issuing uncovered bank-notes to finance public works. The records show that years ago Gottfried Feder made a speech about this part of the Nazi programme in the Reichstag but that nothing serious has ever been proposed about it.

After September 1930 the 107 Nazi deputies introduced a resolution in the Reichstag calling on the government to draft an army of a hundred thousand unemployed for the protection of the Reich's frontiers against the alleged inroads of the Poles.

The Nazis have devised a way of doing away with the Stock Exchange. In order to prevent speculation, they told the Reichstag, securities should be treated in the way real estate is handled in Germany. Their proposal is to have the securities registered in the Real Estate Record, if they represent ownership in landed property—as they mostly do—which procedure would make their sale an extremely complicated operation.

In the same breath they proposed the imposition of retroactive surtaxes on all incomes resulting from Stock Exchange transactions from January 1, 1925, till December 31, 1929. It was suggested that they had stopped at 1930 because they did not want to punish a Germany that had returned so many Nazis to the federal legislature.



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A proclivity for short cuts characterizes the agrarian policy of the National Socialist Party in parliament. At a time when the world market-price of a ton of wheat was 120 marks the Nazis passed a resolution calling on the government to make it compulsory for the farmers to sell their wheat for 300 marks a ton.

Another interesting experiment in farm legislation was embodied in what is known as project No. 1093. In this project Hitler's men demanded that a law should be enacted to prohibit foreclosure of farm-land for non-payment of mortgages. The law should provide the conversion of certain short-term mortgages into long-term obligations.

Only two Nazi measures relating to economic questions have been accepted by the Reichstag during all these years. One of them provided that on Christmas Eve shops must close at five o'clock in the afternoon, with the exception of flower shops, which may keep open later. The second measure was the imposition of a special tax on the big stores.

The parliamentary work of the National Socialist Party in the political field has not been less spectacular, although it has not been more effective.

“While the Treaty of Versailles is in force,” a Nazi bill read, “the colour of the German flag shall be black. The final flag of the Reich shall be the one under which the campaign of liberation will be carried out.” This was meant to say that the flag of the Reich shall be the one designed by Hitler.

The Third Reich will judge severely the cases of the “peace criminals.”

“The Reichstag is called upon to decide that all those



responsible for the revolution of 1918, especially for the ammunition strike, and for other forms of co-operation with the Russian Soviet Republic, shall be indicted for high treason."

The peace efforts of republican Germany have been on several occasions violently condemned by the parliamentary fraction of the Hitler party. It was bitterly opposed to Germany's joining the League of Nations. The Nazis submitted an urgent demand that "in view of the changed conditions and in default of the necessary premises the Reichstag shall ask the government of the Reich to withdraw its request for admission to the League."

Nor have the various peace pacts found more favour in Nazi eyes. One of the resolutions submitted to the Reichstag said :

"The Reichstag shall ask the government of the Reich to denounce the Locarno treaties and the agreement providing for the adhesion of the Reich to the League in view of the harmful consequences for Germany's political and economic situation of the foreign policy known under the names of Locarno, Geneva, and Thoiry."

The three German statesmen who gave their lives for the German cause stand convicted before the National Socialists as the great peace criminals. They attacked Matthias Erzberger, martyred leader of the Catholic Centre Party, because he had dared to speak for peace. Walther Rathenau, assassinated by a racial maniac, had the additional crime of being a Jew. The greatest criminal of all, in Nazi eyes, was Gustav Stresemann, co-author with Aristide Briand of the Locarno Agreements. They could never forgive him because he was neither a Catholic nor a Jew and yet dared to be



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working for peace. Stresemann was flawlessly German, which made him a renegade before Hitlerite public opinion. Among the many projects of law directed against Germany's great Foreign Minister, who died in harness, the following deserves attention as a specimen of the unfair propaganda with which his political foes worried Stresemann to death.

“The Reichstag shall decide,” the Nazis demanded upon receipt of information that Stresemann had been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, “to call upon Reichsminister Dr. Stresemann either to reject the offer of the Nobel Prize of 63,000 marks on the ground of Article 15 of the Reich's Public Official Law, or to make him use it for the assistance of war victims.”

The question of the German minorities living abroad was settled to the entire satisfaction of the Nazis in a resolution providing that all Germans resident abroad—in Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland and elsewhere—shall obtain the right to vote at the Reich's elections. Had the Reichstag not shelved this proposal immediately after it had been submitted, Hitler's men would have solved the thorny problem of the “Anschluss.” The Austrian Germans would have thus acquired full civic rights in the Reich and the French would have acquired the right to send an army against the Austrians to prevent them from voting.

Although no Nazi proposal has been made in the Reichstag to give German-Americans the right to vote at German elections, a handful of Hitler's stalwarts opened a National Socialist branch office in Chicago, with affiliations in several other cities of the United States. The “Teutonia,” as the Chicago branch was called, saw its main function in prosely-



izing America. Munich wanted to give instructions to Chicago, but Chicago refused to obey. "Teutonia" is no more, although efforts at making the swastika the national emblem of the United States have not yet been abandoned.

A perusal of the parliamentary record of the National Socialists in the German State legislatures discloses the fact that their main concern has been to prohibit orthodox Jews from butchering poultry in their own way.

A Hitlerite in the Bavarian Landtag moved to have all unsolved murders from 1840 onward regarded as ritual murders, perpetrated by Jews so as to obtain Christian blood. A Thuringian deputy went even further in moving that all future unsolved murders should be treated as ritual crimes.

Although the parliamentary policy of the National Socialists since the elections of September 1930 has been in the hands of a directorate, consisting of three members, under the leadership of Dr. Wilhelm Frick, erstwhile Minister in Thuringia, Hitler takes full responsibility for the Reichstag campaigns. He has followed closely the Bolshevik example. Propaganda is the Nazi keynote. Since the Nazis take the view that they represent a higher Teutonic morality than the other parties, they feel free to set up their own standards of ethics in the legislative field. They are sure it is unethical to be ethical towards the political opponent, since such chivalry would delay the advent of the Third Reich in which the morality of the superman will prevail.

Therefore, whatever a Nazi says in the legislature need not be taken seriously. Parliament is merely an annex of the publicity department of Nazi headquarters. In these discussions they always follow the same plan. They repeat



the same simple ideas scores of times, since they know that if people hear the same nonsense many times they will begin to think it is the quintessence of wisdom. The public gets tired of building up defences between its fear of novelty and the magic words.

A parting glance is due to the executive achievements of the National Socialist Party. Dr. Wilhelm Frick, co-conspirator of Hitler in 1923, self-styled political cannibal, was Minister of Thuringia for fourteen months. He was the first National Socialist Minister in any German State.

Although Frick's doings in the government building of Weimar provided good copy for the German newspapers, they hardly bore out his reputation as a wild man, although it is true that he was a member of a coalition cabinet in which his party was in a minority. In his analysis of his work as Minister of the Interior and of Education, which he contributed to the "National Socialist Annual of 1932" the achievements he enumerates are extremely meagre. He takes credit for forbidding Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* to be used in Thuringian schools.

He made Professor Schultze-Naumburg, known for his extreme views, remove from the Weimar Museum the works of such men as Pablo Picasso and Marc Chagall, whom Minister Frick called "Eastern under-men." He threw open the National Theatre to Paul Schultz, noted political murderer. He had invited to the University of Jena Professor Dr. Günther, the racist theoretician. Frick banned jazz music and other public entertainments glorifying the American negro. He did not tolerate modern "atonal" music. On the other hand, the number of comedies in the State



Theatre under his administration had increased fourfold. While he was Minister of Education German authors had no new hearing on the stages of Thuringia.

Dr. Frick could do nothing to hasten the day of the Nazi Paradise. Under his rule the rent tax was increased to cover the budget deficit. While he shouted himself hoarse in denunciation of the Young Plan he helped raise the taxes to pay Germany's "tribute to the enemy."

The most controversial official act of Dr. Frick was the introduction of a "prayer of hatred" in the schools of Thuringia. The prayer ended with the words "Germany Awake," and it contained hints at the Nazi theory of the stab in the back as the cause of the post-war collapse. The Supreme Court at Leipzig made him withdraw the prayer.

Dr. Frick's attempt to replace Liberal police officials by National Socialists was not more successful. He had a lively encounter with the Reich which refused to pay its regular contribution to the Thuringian constabulary on the ground that it was being transformed into a party force. To-day the police of Thuringia is not less republican than the police in any other part of the Reich. Professor Schultze-Naumburg no longer discards modernistic works of art from the Museum of Weimar, and jazz once more dominates the scene.

Opponents of the Third Reich point to the unimpressive record of the Hitlerites in the legislature and government as a sure sign of the creative incapacity and spiritual poverty of the Nazi strong men.



CHAPTER XIII

THE DUEL

ONE of the men was pale, his finely chiselled features revealed intellectual curiosity, and his soft voice bespoke sensitiveness. His blue eyes looked mildly through his large spectacles and he was very attentive. This man was the dictator.

The other man wore a frown and tried to appear determined. His sentences were pointed and his gestures flashed with the rapidity of the guillotine blade. From the far end of the Italian renaissance room the portrait of the Iron Chancellor, Prince Bismarck, looked at him and he looked back, as if deriving inspiration from the immobile face. This was the aspirant to the dictatorship.

The meeting between Chancellor Heinrich Brüning, virtually the dictator of the German republic, and Adolf Hitler, would-be dictator of the Third Empire, was lively but inconclusive. The Minister of Transport, young Gottfried Treviranus, was present, wondering what he could do. Dr. Wilhelm Frick, aide-de-camp of Hitler, came also, his face red with exertion while trying to think out something grand and full of meaning. These two acted as seconds at the verbal duel between the meek dictator and the angry party leader. The duel was relentless and it went on and on in the Chancellory as well as outside of it, with Germany and the world in the spectators' gallery.



"Brüning is the best Chancellor we have had since Bismarck," Herr von Oldenburg-Januschau, a conservative baron of the old stock, told a neighbour, and republican Germany has given wide currency to his opinion.

"He is worse than Stalin," the National Socialists retorted and their cheeks were purple with anger.

"Hunger Chancellor . . . Jesuit . . . Chancellor of the Jews," the chorus joined the Nazis.

"An indefatigable worker," his intimates said, and marvelled at his capacity to master details.

Of problems there were many, and more than ordinary intellect was needed to visualize their connections. The second half of 1931 seemed like the funeral of extinguished hopes. The world-wide depression had cut its widest swathes in the Reich. The Germans were wallowing in despair, and the number of the unemployed was increasing by millions. The insolvency of the Darmstädter & National Bank had not precipitated but symbolized the great débâcle. Reparation payments had to be suspended. France was distrustful and the *Ami du Peuple* kept on arming public opinion with the weapons of exaggerated fears.

Brüning did not bang the table and did not wield the big stick. He sat at his desk fourteen hours of the day, trying to prevent a national suicide. The exhilaration to rule was not his in days when everything around him might go up in flames. A false step might start the country rolling down the abyss and the Third Empire of Despair might be on its way. It was a delicate operation to save the Reich, and the surgeon needed more than presence of mind,—he needed inspiration.



In the fortnight after the financial collapse of July 13, 1931, Brüning had President Hindenburg sign thirty emergency decrees, giving the Chancellor almost absolute power and making the work of the opposition all but impossible. The freedom of the Press was curtailed and a financial dictatorship of the utmost rigour was introduced. It was said in those days that the most obvious use the possession of money had was to facilitate one's march into a quiet jail. Money transfers were subjected to no end of limitations. The budget had to be balanced in order to prevent a recurrence of inflation, and it *was* balanced, but at an enormous price. Crushing taxes were imposed on the country and gave the Nazis pretext for a new slogan :

“ German brother, five days out of six you are made to work for the enemy ! ”

A carnival of spending had to be paid for on the morning after. The Reich woke up to find that it owed vast sums to foreign creditors. This was worse than national bankruptcy, the pessimists said ; this was the beginning of the end. Even such a hopeful sign as the increase of exports over imports turned out to be a sign of national calamity. In the economic warfare Germany had been forced back to her last line of defence. She had to use the raw material she could scrape together so as to avoid having to pay for the foreign product.

The factories of the Ruhr slowed down and their roar became a hum. National Socialists and Communists harangued the masses and promised them earthly paradises in exchange for their support.

“ Brüning is to blame for everything,” they shouted in



unison. "If we were in power this country would overflow with honey and milk."

In the State and municipal elections Hitler scored a series of victories. Even cities with a reputation for Liberalism began to flirt with the stalwarts marching under the swastika sign. The State of Anhalt gave the Nazis 57 seats in the legislature against 2 seats they had held before. In the State of Baden they increased their large vote of the September elections of 1930. The Free Hanseatic State of Bremen doubled its previous Nazi vote. And so did other States: Brunswick, proud of her nationalism; Schaumburg-Lippe; Oldenburg; and finally staid Hesse, once the bulwark of Liberal thought.

Hitler made a plea to the world to recognize his claim to power. In October 1931, Bad Harzburg was awakened from its quiet slumber by the beating of drums, the blowing of trumpets, and the march of thousands of men, young and middle-aged, wearing steel helmets.

This was to be the birthday of a national union. Hitler was there with his National Socialists, and he dominated the picture. Alfred Hugenberg, pampered child of the heavy industries, newspaper king and cinema emperor, stood by his side. The Peasant League gave the parade a touch of rustic ingenuity.

Prince August Wilhelm, better known as "Auwi," and his brother, Prince Eitel Friedrich, sons of the German Kaiser, came to the meeting to lay the new German Reich's foundations. Dr. Hjalmar Schacht, former President of the Reichsbank, was present, too, cavilling at the republic because it had shed no tears at his leaving the seat of the mighty.



Hugenberg made a violent speech in which disobedience was the keynote. Hitler clenched his fists and said nothing to which the police could object.

"Behind us stand more than 12 million Germans," Hitler declared, "convinced that the solution of the German problem can come only through our united front. . . ."

Chancellor Brüning sat quietly in the Wilhelmstrasse and added up figures. The budget had to be balanced and new taxes had to be imposed. Then the silent Chancellor stood up and declared to the world :

"We cannot pay reparations . . ." He paused for a second and added : "And we will not."

Hitler was thunderstruck. The sly Jesuit was stealing his thunder. An outcry went up in the Nazi Press and the gods chuckled in their German heaven.

While Hitler perorated in Harzburg about his legal intentions, his lieutenants put the finishing touch on the black-list of the proposed victims of the Third Reich. In Hesse a Nazi conspiracy was unearthed and the investigators looked an intended reign of terror in the face.

If the undertone of the great symphony had not been so tragic the audience would have liked to smile at the gay *scherzo* of errors and mystifications.

Hitler now took it upon himself to offer instruction in the principles of legality and democracy to Chancellor Brüning :

"The Weimar Constitution is the legal basis of the German republic," he wrote the Chancellor when asked to endorse the prolongation of President Hindenburg's term in office. "Article I states that Germany is a republic deriving



all power from the people. Article XLI states that the President shall be chosen by the entire electorate."

Thus Hitler had become a champion of the Constitution since his victory at the polls. He wanted to take advantage of the change in public opinion. He hoped that power would soon be offered to him on a silver plate, and there was now no sense in trying to pilfer the plate which soon must be his own.

In a dramatic exodus the Nazis left the Reichstag as a protest against Brüning's dictatorial measures. This was their official version of the event, but rumour was abroad that the gesture had another reason. The Reichstag was not the Zirkus Krone and bombastic declamations in it sounded hollow. In the house of legislature it was impossible to have the brass band work up patriotic sentiment. What was more important, the feminine contingent, so essential to the outbursts of enthusiasm, was too small in the Reichstag to make it a good platform for party propaganda.

Among the more discontented young men of the party whispers were heard that it was on Hitler's account that the exodus had to be staged. Hitler was not then a German citizen, could not sit in parliament and could not prevent some of the members from excelling in debates, thus increasing their glory and obscuring the fame of their chief.

To Chancellor Brüning the Nazi exodus was of great help. Without their opposition the Reichstag could be used as a rubber stamp. It was an irony of the situation that the Socialists, bitter enemies of dictatorship, had to submit to the rule of emergency decrees. Their sole object was to prevent the Nazis from coming into power, and rather than have



Hitler triumph they would have voted—as a prominent National Socialist remarked—even for Bismarck's notorious anti-Socialist laws.

Brüning with great skill used Hitler as the bogey man. Every time the Socialists showed a disposition to kick over the traces the Hitler menace was produced. Foreign creditors, too, were kept in check by intimating what would happen to them if the Nazis took the reins.

In March, 1931, the Chancellor gave the Reichstag a "Summer holiday" until late in October. This meant that even the rubber stamp had been discarded and that Brüning could govern unhindered through his emergency decrees.

While Hitler was professing his new faith in legality, Brüning decided to be on the *qui vive*. In the autumn of 1931 he reshaped his cabinet, giving the Ministry of Interior to General Wilhelm Groener, one of the rare Prussian generals with deep republican conviction, who was also Minister of National Defence. The fact that Groener had two portfolios in his hands left at his immediate disposal for the protection of the republican regime a splendidly selected army of 250,000 men—100,000 of them being the Reichswehr and 150,000 being the Shupos, Germany's armed security police. A march on Berlin would not have found republican Germany unprepared.

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"Is it an historical fatality," Anatole France one day asked his confidant, Sándor Kémeri, "that political mountebanks are so numerous in eras of decadence?" He was thinking of General Boulanger who had ridden on his black horse



into an adventure which might have turned out fatal for republican France.

The large number of Hitler lieutenants gives an affirmative answer to the question of Anatole France. Yet, post-war Germany had her share of great men, although their greatness had to be paid for with life. Erzberger, Rathenau and Stresemann would have done credit to any country under the most trying conditions of its history. Is Brüning—Hitler's scholarly-looking opponent—one of Germany's great statesmen? Before answering this question a brief biographical sketch will be in place.

Brüning is heir to untold generations of hard work, a member of Westphalian peasant stock. He, however, betrays no sign of his rustic ancestry. The Chancellor is an intellectual, in the best sense of the word, trained to gauge his emotional reactions in the light of his mental processes. He has the unusual capacity of thinking in terms of an English or a French mind almost as articulately as if he were a native of those countries, owing to the fact, probably, that he has spent some time in Brittany and nearly two years in England. He studied at German and foreign universities, showed great interest in history and prepared to be a teacher.

"Then the World War broke out," wrote Dr. Richard von Kühlmann, former German Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. "Only after repeated efforts the weakly-looking would-be schoolmaster succeeded in being enlisted in the army. . . . As a lieutenant in a special machine-gun section he distinguished himself in most dangerous positions."

Dr. Brüning is a Catholic, which fact in Germany, where the Catholic Centre Party is well entrenched, is almost a



party programme. His brother was a priest and he is buried in America. Young Dr. Brüning received a good education in party discipline as a pupil of Mgr. Kaas, head of the Centre Party. For three years he was attached to the Catholic trade-union movement, contributed to its official paper, *Der Deutsche*, and was private secretary to Adam Stegerwald, Minister of Social Welfare.

The Centrists sent Brüning to parliament in 1925. His career as a deputy began inauspiciously. He was not one of those speakers of the Reichstag who drew large crowds, and his speeches did not fill the columns of the newspapers. In other words, he was not a *prima donna* of the legislature, nor was he a darling of the political *salons* where whispers start reputations and myths are minted into fame.

It was in the obscurity of committee rooms that Brüning's fame began to sprout wings. Word spread that he was an expert on government finances and many other things. Deputies whose names carried weight met him in secret conclave and pumped him for information, while Brüning shunned publicity.

Gradually his name became to be known in the Reichstag corridors. In 1929 he succeeded to the leadership of the Centrist Party, an unusual honour for a man only 43 years of age. He was now heir to the Chancellorship if the Socialist incumbent, Hermann Müller, should fall.

Herr Müller did his best to fall and Brüning held his peace. The Socialist Chancellor had more than one reason for wanting to say good-bye to pomp and power. He was a sick man, who was to die shortly. There was a party reason, too, why the Socialists did not want to retain power. The



budget had become unbalanced and it was inevitable that the government should cut into the dole of the unemployed. Herr Brüning, too, tried to avoid the ordeal, partly, no doubt, because he was timid and disliked the spotlight.

In the Spring of 1930 the issue came to a head. Hermann Müller resigned and Dr. Brüning had to take his place. In those days many Germans were hoping for a Teutonic Mussolini, but Brüning was not one. Instead of posing as a strong man he made it his business to safeguard Germany from the self-appointed strong men of the Reich.

With a remarkable insight into the mentality of the German nation, Heinrich Brüning selected Field-Marshal Hindenburg as the fountain-head of his political authority. Hindenburg, past eighty and as massive as ever, attached to the old and loyal to the new, faithful to his oath to uphold the Constitution of the republic, stood behind Brüning in the hour of gravest danger. It is a great question how the Winter of 1931 would have ended—the worst Winter since 1809, the Germans said—if he had not loomed so formidably behind the republic. The Reichswehr would not desert its former war-lord and as long as the army had no truck with the reactionaries, a Nazi dictatorship by force of arms would be dead before it was born.

Besides, Herr Brüning made skilful use of his war reputation against Herr Hitler's youthful associates who were blood-thirsty in their oratory against the Chancellor, but who had been only "milk-thirsty" when the Chancellor was garnering his laurels in the trenches.

If Providence had entered the producing field it could not have found two characters so fundamentally different as



THE DUEL

CSL

Brüning and Hitler. No greater contrast could be imagined than the Chancellor on a platform facing the Nazi demigod.

"I have been reproached," the Chancellor once declared, "for keeping silent too often. The duty to work conscientiously for all appears to me superior to the duty to talk, and I am confident the German people will take its stand on the side of matter-of-fact earnestness."

To an audience spoiled by Hitler's dramatics, Brüning's passion for facts and figures seems unexciting and cold. His voice is monotonous and he seldom uses gestures. Reason is not a good vote-getter when nations are stampeded, and Brüning is neither a fanatic nor a dishonest man to think that at his word of command the earthquake can be stopped.

Judging by Nazi standards, Brüning is German's worst politician. He makes no attempt to sugar-coat bitter pills and it is not his hobby to collect credit for work well done. Not only is he unable to arouse the masses but he can make no attempt to be popular beyond relying on his belief that honest work performed with enthusiasm and care commends itself in the long run even to the political foe.

Brüning has brought no startling idea to the solution of the German problem. His ambition is to preserve the republic and to carry it through all its present vicissitudes.

"We are firmly resolved," he declared in an address, "to proceed along our chosen path, awaiting the time which soon must come, when international co-operation will save the world from sinking into misery and chaos."

These words give the measure of the man, his greatness and limitations. He is not a creative statesman, but if genius means applying one's full energy to the best solution of the



HITLER

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problem with the least loss of time, and with the greatest efficiency, then Heinrich Brüning is a genius. If he had known how to dramatize the political issues his work might have been thwarted by demagoguery. It is not to him, but to men like Hitler, that the dictum of Friedrich Engels, one of the fathers of socialism, may apply : “ Where statesmanship is stagnating, demagoguery is in flower.”



CHAPTER XIV

ENTHUSIASM COSTS MONEY

POLITICAL parties need money to keep the pot boiling, and Adolf Hitler's Nazis cannot be an exception to the rule. Miracles do not happen even in politics, and when the Nazis began to score their victories which made their party the second largest group in the Reichstag, the word of command of a sympathetic Providence was not sufficient to explain the National Socialist march. "Cherchez l'argent" has become as favourite a motto in Germany as it is in other countries.

Who finances the Hitlerites? Can the proletariat support a party which caters for it on a nationalist platform? Can business support a party which calls itself socialistic?

Although the Nazis, according to their official programme, want to nationalize all corporate concerns, their hearts are not of stone. Herr Feder, the party high-priest on economic problems, has exempted from nationalization those whom he calls the founders of Germany's heavy industries, such as the Krupps, the Thyssens, Abbé, Mannesmann, Kirdorf, and Siemens. Lack of consistency has never caused the Nazis sleepless nights, and thus no effort has been made to reconcile the anathema uttered against the vast concerns, especially the syndicates and trusts, with the fact that Emil Kirdorf was the founder of the Rhenish Westphalian Coal Syndicate, and



that the Krupps, Thyssens and Mannesmanns have founded some of Germany's vastest trusts.

To the caustic pen of Richard Lewinsohn, better known in Germany as "Morus," we owe a great deal of information about the financial resources of the party which promises to repudiate Germany's reparation debts on its first day in office.

Morus has an inquisitive mind, and whenever he observes signs of unselfish and vocal patriotism in German politics, he wants to know who finances that patriotism. He shares the belief of the German scholar who said that politics is the art of making your own interests appear to be the interests of the country. In his book, *Das Geld in Politik* ("Money in Politics") he has traced the business ramifications of the political parties, and has furnished valuable information about the financial resources of the Nazis, on which the following account is partly based.

Bavarian industrialists were the first to finance the national socialism of Hitler and of his cohorts. Privy Councillor Aust, head of the Bavarian Federation of Industries, and his son-in-law, Herr Kuhlo, were then the principal financial agents of the movement. His Maffeis, an industrial dynasty in Munich, and Herr Hornschuch, prominent manufacturer of Kulmbach, in the Upper Franconia district of Bavaria, have long been known as the financial backers of the Hitlerites. Commercial Councillor Wilhelm Seitz and Consul General Edward Scharrer, two other representatives of the Bavarian industries, have displayed considerable zeal in winning over a certain part of the Munich Press to the Nationalist cause by extending to them financial assistance.

Certain business concerns have the reputation of special-



izing in national socialism. The most famed of these was the firm of Eugen Hoffmann & Co., which included such men as the Duke Ludwig Wilhelm of Bavaria, Prince Guido Henckel-Donnersmarck of Rottach, Count Einsiedel of Starnberg, and Baron von Kramer-Klett. There were so many aristocrats in the concern that it had to go into bankruptcy.

A patriotic film company, the Landlicht A. G. für Film-industrie, in which Hugo Ritter von Maffei and Commercial Privy Councillor Zentz had important financial interests, was another industrial detachment of Hitler's shock troops. This company, too, went into bankruptcy.

Bavaria was not the only German State to launch the Nazi venture financially, although she can rightly claim the lion's share. Investigating the financial origin of the movement, the Reichstag had brought to light the names of several non-Bavarian supporters. It created something like a sensation when testimony brought out the fact that the Federation of the Ironmasters of the Ruhr and the machine industry of the State of Württemberg had contributed considerable amounts to Hitler's party treasury.

From time to time Hitler sallies forth to raise some money among the industrial magnates. He has been most successful in the valley of the Ruhr, in Thuringia and in certain parts of Saxony, especially in Leipzig. Emil Kirdorf, pioneer of the machine age with the mentality of a mediæval knight, gave him money and wrote to him a eulogistic letter. His son-in-law, Fregattenkapitän Hans Krüger, a tight-lipped Junker with a penchant for industrial conquests, has helped to sway the huge Gelsenkirchen industries to the Hitler camp.



Dr. Fritz Thyssen—an industrial Napoleon to many—calls Hitler his friend and supports his movement financially.

Gottfried Feder is considered Hitler's liaison officer with the industrial and land magnates of Germany's East. As one of the fathers of a new socialistic theory his visit to the château of Herr von Wudpersheim in Lower Silesia caused some gossip, particularly because he was fêted there and listened to as an oracle by the most reactionary aristocrats of the neighbourhood.

The Reichstag investigation disclosed the foreign origin of some of the party funds. This included an anonymous contribution of 330,000 Swiss francs which, some wags suggested at the time, was Switzerland's tribute to the man who was responsible for more billions of marks crossing the Swiss frontier than anyone before.

From Holland came the gulden collected by the Hitler admirer, Professor von Bissing. German-Americans sent Hitler their dollars. A correspondent of a German newspaper in America saw his agent who had approached Henry Ford for money and did not get it. Ford's reputation as a reactionary and Jew-baiter was great in Nazi ranks some years ago.

The Skoda Works, the largest munition factory of Czechoslovakia, controlled partly by French capital, participated in the collection of Hitler funds in the Czech republic.

The treasurer of the Nazis gave testimony that every franc, gulden, dollar and Czech crown is closely scrutinized as to its origin, and that Jewish money is scrupulously kept out of the party's tin box.

A Hitler lieutenant resigned from his post on account of what he termed Hitler's subservience to industrial interests.



“Herr Hitler,” this lieutenant wrote, “has not been able in the course of several years to fulfil binding promises he has given me, on account of the objections of Herr Mutschmann in Plauen, the lace industrialist.”

Even when industry does not contribute directly to the Hitler war funds, it may be of use in throwing the gates of its plants open to National Socialist agitators and encouraging them to enrol their men. The Siemens plants and the important Borsig works were pioneers in neutralizing Socialist influence by Nazi propaganda. Alfred Hugenberg has done very much to make Hitler acceptable in good society.

Several representatives of German Big Business have not neglected to give their support to efforts on the Nazis' part to bring up a new generation imbued with hatred toward the neighbours. Among the men cited by Morus as the financial backers of the ultra-reactionary “Hochschulring”—a federation of die-hard university students—the general director of the mammoth United Steel Works plays an important part.

The United States is sometimes blamed by German Liberals, and more often praised by German reactionaries, for showing the way toward the co-operation of industry and politics. Professor Karl Duisberg of Leverkusen, a prominent German industrialist, is credited with wedding German industry with the reactionary parties in emulation of what he likes to describe as American methods.

The birth certificate of the “Duisberg System” was issued at the constituent meeting of the State Political Association in November, 1926. It was in the form of an address describ-



ing the purpose of the association which was meant to develop into a super-lobby. It comprised representatives of the powerful League of German Industries and leaders of other organizations. The address has had some influence on the Nazi approach to economic questions.

“In treating important economic problems,” the paper reads, “a new experiment must be made, and America has taught us how it should be attempted. America’s political life is dominated by organizations representing economic interests. The organizations discuss the outstanding issues and adopt new policies. In Germany these questions are decided in the Reichstag. We must mend our ways and make our influence felt on the political parties. . . . In order to carry out the ideas of our Association money is needed. America knows this and we must emulate her example.”

Hitler’s is said to be the best financed party in Germany. Members pay a monthly fee of one mark. In the Spring of 1932 the party leaders claimed a membership of over 800,000 members. The initiation fee is two marks for every member. Since the SA. revolt in 1930, members are assessed another 30 pfennigs a month, which is their contribution to the insurance fund of the Fascist army. Wealthy members pay more and Nazi headquarters have the right to make the members pay additional contributions.

The admission fee to Nazi meetings is another important source of income. Hitler’s speeches draw the largest crowds and his thousands of admirers have often to pay as much as three marks to see and hear him. Next in popularity comes Dr. Joseph Göbbels, the Berlin chieftain.

Whenever the treasury is in danger of depletion, Hitler



may order the issue of a Nazi loan which is subscribed to by party members. At the end of 1929, when the party had to shoulder heavy burdens in connection with the purchase of the "Brown House" in Berlin, such a loan was floated. The minimum subscription was 10 marks, repayable after one year. Interest was fixed at $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent less than the discount rate of the Reichsbank. This loan netted 800,000 marks for Hitler's party treasury.

While Hitler has not concluded the alliance between politics and industry he has made it an important feature of his movement. Industry and politics were not complete strangers during Kaiser Wilhelm's regime, but their close connection may be said to have begun after the war. Democracy was a menace, unlike the parliamentarism of the imperial era, when the legislature had only auxiliary functions and actual power was in the hands of a few.

German heavy industry answered the proletarian onslaught by turning toward the Nationalists. Hugo Stinnes was the great apostle of this silent counter-revolution, and under his leadership the Nationalist flock increased in influence and number. The political lights of the German Nationalist Party—which is allied from time to time with Hitler—include such men as Dr. Jakob Hasslacher, general manager of the Rhenish Steel Works; Johann Reichert, head of the Association of the Iron and Steel Industrialists; Gustav Rademacher and Bernhard Leopold, mining executives.

In the scrimmage for political power through parliamentary representation, the banks have kept aloof, rumours to the contrary notwithstanding. A conspicuous exception was the Disconto Bank before its merger with the Deutsche



Bank. The Disconto Bank was known to have backed the reactionaries. Most of the other banks are known to look with favour on the work of the parties which advocate a policy of reconciliation with France.

The star performers in Germany's weird *danse macabre*, the Hitlerites, did not just happen to come along and conquer the money bags of the industrial magnates. The Bavarian "Orgesch"—an abbreviation of Organization Escherich—named after the mild-looking Forest Councillor Escherich, was one of the first terrorist organizations to appeal to the money-sense of many Germans. With the aid of an important section of Bavarian commerce and industry it thrived and inspired the work of a number of smaller organizations, such as the "Orheuss," "Orzentz" and "Orka," named after wealthy Bavarians with an ambition to save their country and to see their pictures in the Sunday issue of the *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*.

So many reactionary organizations had come into being which had to be fed with gold that they saw themselves compelled to unite their forces in the V.V.V.D., as the Vereinigte Vaterländische Verbände (United Patriotic Societies) became to be known. The political attitude of the organization can be guessed by bearing in mind that it followed the traditions of the Pan-German League (Alldeutscher Verband), which was brought into being at the end of the last century to combat the so-called liberal tendencies of Wilhelm II.

The shock troops of the extreme reactionaries were known as O.C. (Organization Consul), named after Captain Ehrhardt, alias Consul Eichmann, the professional counter-



revolutionary. Ehrhardt marched into Berlin, helped overthrow the constitutional government of the Reich, and marched out again after the Socialist Trade Unions had declared a strike. Ousted but not defeated, he moved into Hungary and set about uniting the reactionaries of all countries, with his headquarters in Budapest.

In the Autumn of 1923 some Northern Bavarian industrialists financed Ehrhardt to lead another march against Berlin. He was willing and so were his men, euphoniously called the Bavarian Emergency Police. But Hitler stole a march on him by staging the abortive beer-hall putsch in Munich.

Meanwhile other reactionary organizations made brief appearances on the stage. Hugo Stinnes is said to have been one of the industrial magnates who financed the Black Reichswehr. It has been established beyond doubt that the banking firm of Burchardt & Co., and the Bank of Textile Industry invested heavily in these strangest of German post-war political outgrowths.

The Stahlhelm was next in line. It has displayed a vitality which few other reactionary organizations have. Gradually it has ousted the smaller extremist units, such as the Viking League, the Werwolf and the Bund Oberland. Its success may be due to the military glamour with which it has known how to surround itself. Goose-stepping is a tradition which even many pacifists in Germany find difficult to condemn, and when the band strikes up the imperial martial airs and tens of thousands of young legs pound the ground with automaton-like precision, Michael Spiessbürger becomes conscious of a lump in his throat.



And then came Hitler. He scored over all the other reactionary organizations because in a time of stress and need he appealed to prejudices instead of common sense. His good luck was to come into the limelight just when the average German felt he must do something desperate in order to give vent to his feelings.

Hitler's advent coincided with a tensely expectant time. The Messiah of Absurdity was welcome, the Bible of Hatred was his Writ. Out of the Bondage of Versailles the New Man was to lead his flock into the land of freedom. The reparation burden was the supreme execration and the quintessence of humiliation. The presence of African soldiers on the Rhine, the sacred river of Teutonic civilization, had been the final challenge. The withdrawal of the French troops from the Rhine did not make the ultra-patriots forget the "Schmach am Rhein."

The antagonism of worker and capitalist accentuated the conflict. Bolshevism has been a nightmare for the heavy industries and even Socialism was suspect. Labour became tired of temporizing and began to swell the ranks of the extremists, Communists and National Socialists. The Nazis became more popular because they could promise heaven with more reckless abandon. The Communists were bound by their dogmas, while the Hitlerites were limited only by the bounds of their imagination. Those who preach love, a German philosopher once said, are crucified, while those who preach hatred are loved. The Nazis preached hatred against the Bolsheviks, the French and, above all, against the Jews. By combining nationalism with a mild infection of socialism and by preaching nationalism to the Nationalists



and socialism to the Socialists, the Hitlerites exploited a very ingenious idea.

Although some German industrialists trust the Nazis and distrust the Communists, in some respects the gulf between them is not so wide. "To-day a Nazi, to-morrow a Bolshie," a Berlin paper commented on the conversion of a well-known Hitlerite to the religion of Stalin. Both parties express the distrust of the masses of existing political and economic devices to ameliorate their fate. The programmes of both parties are sufficiently radical to appeal to a world disgusted with procrastination. Hitler is confident of his ultimate victory, especially since his connection with industrial interests has softened the radical programme of his party.

CHAPTER XV

THURSDAY AND FRIDAY

"PRIVY COUNCILLOR HUGENBERG asks Herr Hitler for an appointment."

When Privy Councillor Hugenberg wants an appointment he usually gets it. He and Hitler marched together at the end of 1929 against the Young Plan. They were the leaders of the referendum for the dissolution of the Prussian Diet in 1931. At Bad Harzburg they shook hands warmly and there were tears in eyes of steely blue. This was the beginning of a crusade against the spirit of revolution. Marxism was the enemy; how could it survive this holy alliance? The constellation of the stars indicated an 18th of Brumaire, but who was going to be the German Napoleon and who the Abbé Siéyès?

Hugenberg is Hitler's Man Thursday and Friday, his friend and his enemy, his yes man and his no man. From a world uninitiated into the mental processes of the arch-Junker, Hugenberg has not received sufficient credit for Hitler's rise. The historian of another day, if he remembers the Nazi and Nationalist chieftains, will have to point out that without Hugenberg's assistance, Hitler's spectacular success at the polls could not have been imagined.

In the Summer of 1930, Alfred Hugenberg committed the most remarkable political hara-kiri. He concluded a pact



with Hitler by which his Nationalists would not disturb the political campaign of the Nazis. The undertaking was mutual in theory only. Hugenberg opened the arena for the Nazi lion to destroy his own Nationalists. The result was disastrous for the Nationalists, and Hugenberg smiled. He knew what he was doing.

Hugenberg is Germany's William Randolph Hearst, but with one difference. He is in politics to espouse a great cause and not in order to gratify his personal vanity. His cause is reaction refined into a religion. For Hugenberg it is criminal negligence on the employers' part to let their labourers pool their forces for self-defence. He believes that capital preceded man on earth. Money, therefore, is the prime cause and should be the moving spirit of the Universe. Those having no capital should be content to live as instruments of the intelligence inherent in gold.

"He is a reactionary," Chancellor Brüning was reported to have told Hitler in the course of a conversation. "Leave Hugenberg alone." The Chancellor may not have known that Hugenberg could not be forced not to love someone.

At twenty-one Hugenberg wrote verses about love and the nightingale. Then he turned his back on the nightingale and accepted a position in the Prussian Land Office. Goethe had been a government official and Hugenberg might develop into a Goethe if he was successful in bureaucracy. This was in line with traditions among young poets. If some of them never reached the heights of the author of *Faust* it was because, as Heine said, they never reached Goethe's age of eighty-three.

In the Land Office Hugenberg decided to seek fame as



a politician rather than a poet. Cattle-breeding was the field in which the ambitious young man hoped to earn eternal fame as "Assessor und Stellvertretender Landrat," the equivalent of a Deputy Land Councillor. He worked in Eastern Germany and settled peasants on land reclaimed from the swamps. Even then he had his fits of high-patriotism, such as when he was devising means to get the Polish landlords out of the East of Germany where they had been living for centuries.

Hugenberg, then, went into cattle-farming for his own account. As he had the secret of making others work for him he was extremely successful and he had no doubt that the stars had prescribed for him a road to fame.

The cattle were passive and obeyed his orders without opposition. This was no life for a fighting man, so back to the bureaucracy Hugenberg went, ready to capitalize his farm experience. He was now a Consulting Councillor in the Prussian Finance Ministry, where he aroused his colleagues' admiration with the broad sweep of his mind in solving paltry problems. His spectacular rise, however, began when, after leaving the Ministry, he was elected to the board of directors of a large bank in Frankfurt-am-Main.

Two years after his appointment Hugenberg was general manager of the Krupp Works in Essen, Germany's great munition factory. In the careers of most other men this would have been a crowning achievement. In his it was merely a station toward the ultimate destination.

He was now the leader of an illustrious group of industrialists, was spoken of as the Titan of the Ruhr and the benevolent tyrant of armies of labourers. He was in love with



the World War which had brought new life to Essen. While Hitler tried to exterminate the enemy one by one, Hugenberg did it by the hundred thousand. Those who knew the general manager of the Krupp Works admired his energy and arrogance. Although he was not heard or seen in public, he was working on the realization of great dreams—the destruction of England, the crushing of France, and the ruin of the German trade unions.

In the Spring of 1918 Hugenberg left the Krupp Works, in search of new laurels and new adventures. A trained poet, cattle-breeder, and industrial magnate, his obvious vocation was to become a newspaper magnate.

“Hugenberg is getting queer,” his former associates said with a quizzical smile and were glad a competitor was out of the way. Krupp’s erstwhile general manager was past fifty when he bought the *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*, an influential daily, and started on the career which has provided him with life’s great ambition. The building up of a vast journalistic empire was his aim. Germany’s war was dying of malnutrition and Hugenberg was ready to furnish its spiritual bill of fare. As the head of a metropolitan daily, he was in a better position to keep the domestic foe in check.

The *Anzeiger* turned out to be the first one of a luxuriant growth of newspapers. In twelve years Hugenberg obtained control or decisive influence over nearly two-thirds of Germany’s almost three thousand papers. Through the control of the large “Telegraphen Union” news agency he became the virtual master of the Press.

The provinces are Hugenberg’s main strongholds and his influence is particularly strong in Eastern Prussia. For



the benefit of the smaller papers he brought into being the "Wipro" agency which, as a mordant critic remarked, is everything to the country Press except its dry nurse. It supplies out of the way towns with tales about the wicked life of Kurfürstendamm, with stories of the careers of fashionable murderesses, and, above all, with strong words about democracy and republic. It manufactures editorials with the aid of the most recent devices of high-pressure efficiency. It ransacks the four corners of the globe for jokes with just a touch of naughtiness—but not too much.

When Hugo Stinnes began to buy up Germany, Hugenberg contested his claim to the German soul. Krupp's former manager had turned out to be a great friend of newspapers in distress. He had brought into being a war-board for the protection of the Press. The board did its work efficiently, and Hugenberg found himself the undisputed master of the conservative newspaper field.

While Stinnes was in the eyes of all the world, Hugenberg kept in the background and amused himself with gaining an influence over Germany's political life of which the country was not at all aware. Power, to him, was not a means to defy his own weakness, but it was a tool to achieve a higher purpose. He wanted to have a Gentlemen's Reich with nice people occupying all the high offices and consulting him in the shadows behind the stage. He wanted to be the harbinger of restoration, the herald of the return of the kings. He would not have minded being a German Talleyrand, with less vanity and more honesty, with less grim amiability and more derisive hatred. Like Hitler, his master and apprentice, Alfred Hugenberg is a good hater. These



two men sailing the waters of a frenzied ocean were bound to find each other and become fast friends or implacable enemies.

The public gives Hitler credit for announcing the cardinal principle of a new Germany : no more reparations. Hugenberg has prior claim to the idea. It is true, however, that, in spite of all his power as a newspaper Tsar, Hugenberg has never been able to popularize the religion of non-fulfilment.

Roaming the seas, Hugenberg came across this untutored carpenter boy, who was trying to find a life worth living. Looking deep into the seed out of which Hitler's popularity grew, it is impossible not to see what a part Hugenberg played.

Hugenberg was too good a strategist not to know that war could not be carried on by trying to garrison all the cities of the enemy. First he had to gain a foothold on the frontier and from there he could start an offensive against the hostile army. What could be more natural than that reaction should select Junker-ridden Eastern Prussia as its stronghold ? There the November revolution has never been popular. Through the banks which Hugenberg had bought in those parts, he controlled not only the welfare but also the political thinking of a large section of the population. He pushed his lines ahead continually and made preparations for the final offensive.

The inflationary empires went down crashing and the gigantic Stinnes' interests became a by-word for fraud after the death of the great builder. Hugenberg prospered in good and bad times alike. During the war he had founded



the "German Cinema Company" which specialized in horrors allegedly perpetrated by the Allies. After the war it supplied the cinema audiences with the launching of British battleships, with the pictures of French soldiers standing guard on the Rhine, and with General Ludendorff unveiling war memorials.

When the "Universum Film A.G.," better known as the "Ufa," looked for new masters, Hugenberg induced his friends, some of the leaders of the heavy industries, to buy the company. He became its "spiritus rector" and dictator. For a man embarking on the mission of saving Germany's soul, the possession of the most popular film company of the Reich must have been an invaluable asset. On the silver screen socialism could be combated. In this respect, however, Hugenberg has been disappointed. The "Ufa" turned out to be too great an institution to serve as a tool of super-propaganda. It showed some years ago the most philo-Semitic German picture, the "Dreyfus Affair."

Much mystery has surrounded Hugenberg's Twelve Apostles, known as his "national men." People had suspected they were counter-revolutionary generals and members of the former ruling houses. They had been described as sinister characters and unscrupulous diggers of political gold. Finally Hugenberg was induced to publish their names. They turned out to be industrialists, bankers, former government officials, and one or two generals—mostly old people, very angry with the republic and too impotent to do anything about it.

When all had been prepared for the campaign, Hugenberg stepped forward and announced he wanted to be



Napoleon. His programme was a paraphrase of the Shavian phrase: "Every step of progress means a duty repudiated and a scripture torn up."

He denounced republicanism as high treason and democracy as a poison. The Nationalist Party, which was the second largest in parliament for years, turned over the reins to him.

While Hitler harangued the suburbs and incited a religious war against reason and understanding, Hugenberg made himself at home among the real rulers of Germany, a handful of men who controlled industry and banking. Foreign Minister Gustav Stresemann was the pet enemy of both because of the Minister's efforts for peace. Hugenberg had particular reason to hate the father of the Locarno Pacts. Both Stresemann and Hugenberg were members of the National Liberal Party before the war, which was liberal only in name. Having embraced democracy, the Foreign Minister was treated by his erstwhile political associates as a deserter. Besides, during the war Stresemann suggested to Krupp von Bohlen, the ammunition king, that Hugenberg was miscast in the rôle of general manager. The suggestion was made in public and from that day on Hugenberg would not be happy unless he had Stresemann's scalp.

Smarting under this affront, Hugenberg led the campaign against the Foreign Minister with spirited determination. In the Reichstag he was at a disadvantage against Stresemann, —a brilliant debater. But Hugenberg could pull wires which were not responsive to anyone else. In his campaign against the spirit of Locarno he discovered Hitler and his great value as a popular agitator. Hugenberg shared the



view that the first followers of a creed prove nothing against it. So he took Hitler in tow.

Hitler and Hugenberg are ideal spiritual mates. Hugenberg has many qualities Hitler does not possess. He knows, above all, how to take infinite pains. He knows how to keep himself under strict control and his feigned fits of temper always serve a purpose. He is matchless in using others for his aims and making them think that it is a privilege to dust his shoes. He has the cold efficiency of a machine. His unimaginative genius helps him to go straight toward the goal, without being distracted by scruples and doubts which would harass a man spiritually more refined. He finds the core of a problem with remarkable ease. His vanity is impersonal and he has a way of seeing himself as the embodiment of interests and ideas.

His political opponents call him "Germany's errand boy," with a hint at his manifold and seemingly unrelated activities. Others call him the "demon of war," and think he is Germany's bad man, more vicious than Hitler and all his Nazis. Others deprecate his importance and speak of him as a mystic running in circles and incapable of harm.

Although it is not generally known, it is quite safe to say that to no one does Hitler owe so much gratitude as to Hugenberg. Without his aid he would have had a harder climb to reach the peak. There is no contradiction in the fact that their ways do not always run parallel. At the presidential elections of March 1932 Hugenberg had his own candidate in the field, a Colonel Theodor Düsternberg, conveniently colourless to be discarded.



CHAPTER XVI

WILD OATS

“Bald flattern Hitlers Fahnen über alle Strassen
Die Knechtschaft dauert nur noch kurze Zeit.”

(Soon Hitler's banners will flutter in all streets
And slavery will come to a sudden end.)

THE march of Hitler's youthful followers is as defiant as the air of the young men. They do not want to accept compromises and half-measures. The battle is on for a Germany ruled by a dictator,—the supreme master of all Teutons, the quintessence of Aryanism and of native culture. The younger generation is aligned against age, because the search for “something new” must go on ceaselessly, feverishly, frantically. Fathers and sons, mothers and daughters are on the opposite side of the fences and the offspring knows no mercy in its dealings with the old.

The search for a New Renaissance is on. The revolt is not directed against the war which lies at the root of all the evils of post-war Germany, but against complacency and compromise. The war is on for war and against peace, since the younger generation of the Reich cannot forgive itself that it was born too late to lie dying in the trenches across Ypres and on the Somme. War is romantic and peace is drab, frustrated hope is better than no hope at all. Hatred against



the causes of Germany's humiliation is the keynote of a new world of neighbourly love. Youth declares that it did not sign the Peace Treaties, and forces the hands of the older generation to repudiate the obligation to pay the tribute imposed upon it at the point of bayonets. To-morrow youth may compel the government to repudiate the Reich's obligations to let the Pole be master of the Corridor. What will happen then? War will be almost inevitable. And yet youth will not subscribe to the wisdom of older men. It knows itself capable of taking the right road to a better world.

Hitler has not made the German youth movement. On the contrary, German youth has helped to make his movement what it is to-day. The republic gives the voting right to every citizen over twenty years of age. German youth is politically minded. It is familiar with the great issues of the age. Reparations and disarmament, rationalization and Germany's place in the sun are problems which it discusses with animation and gusto. A German boy of 14 is considered dull if he is not able to state his views on these issues. He hears about them in school, at home, in the streets, and he reads about them in papers written especially for youth. While tramping in the woods he discusses them with his friends. Hans and Gretchen entertain each other with their views of the financial situation and the political position of the Reich. They criticize the great and the near-great. They are public opinion, and they have to be counted upon. The young people of Germany give to the expression of their political views a forcefulness of which the war generation does not always find itself capable.

The political parties educate the youth and at the same



time learn from it. The political education of would-be voters begins at an early age. Over a million young people graduate into the voting class each year. Party work begins when boys and girls are in their teens. Germany has about 9,000,000 young people between 14 and 21. The number of voters between 21 and 32 is over 13,000,000. The two groups comprise more than a half of the voting population. They are the real shock troops of the parties and of the "Weltanschauung," the parties express.

It is a familiar sight in Germany to see small boys in the uniform of Hitler's shock troops. The Nazi children are organized in the "Jungvolk," which corresponds to the advance guard of the Italian Fascists. Their number is not large but their political education is vigorous. They are just as familiar with the theory of the "stab in the back" and of the "shame of the Rhine" as people of more mature age.

Young people between 14 and 20 are members of the "Hitler Jugend." This organization was first heard of in Saxony at the time of Hitler's November putsch. The public at large took notice of it in 1929 when the leader passed 3,500 members of the Hitler youth in review at the celebration of Nuremburg. The monthly enrolment after the Nuremburg days was said to be near 3,000 new members. The main object of this group is to spread the Hitler gospel in proletarian families. Through the children Hitlerism is to be smuggled into the strongholds of Marxism.

Hitler's score is highest, however, among the young men of the former middle classes. War and inflation have wiped out the small bourgeoisie and reduced it to the level of the proletarians. Using the time-worn device of interpreting



effect as its own cause Hitler has been successful in convincing a large part of the former middle classes that their downfall was due to the republic. The children of the erstwhile *rentiers*, government officials, and professional men responded quickly to the Nazi call and they were encouraged by their families. The "Nazional Sozialist Schülerbund" (NS. School League) stands in the forefront of Hitler's battle line as representative of the young warriors of the secondary schools. The bitterness with which students of the German Gymnasium carry on their political work has often been praised by Nazi leaders. Members of the League take a vow not only to work for Nazi ideals but also to fight their political enemies in the school. The political enemy may be a teacher of republican or pro-Jewish sympathies. Passive resistance and occasional ridicule are the weapons of the political work in the classrooms.

"The League of German Girls" is the organization striving to work up public sentiment for Hitlerism among the girls below the voting age. Although Hitler would deprive woman of all her political rights and would make her the twentieth-century edition of a mediæval woman to whom chivalry is due, but no voice in the affairs of the State, the enthusiastic participation of thousands of young girls on behalf of the Nazi movement is a puzzle to the observer.

The most important youth organization of Hitler's movement is the National Socialist Student League, founded by a student in 1926. While the youth of the proletariat follows mostly the red flag of the Communists, the majority of the university students have sworn allegiance to Hitler. Out of a total of some 140,000 students at the end of 1931, some



DEMONSTRATION OF FEMALE NAZI ORGANIZATIONS

*Courtesy of European Picture Service, New York
(European Syndicating Prohibited)*



100,000 students of the schools of higher learning in Germany belonged to the Hitler groups. The Central Student organization of the German Universities is in the hands of the Hitlerites and of their allies, the Hugenbergites. Several universities with long traditions of Liberalism are counted in the Nazi columns.

Hitler has adopted the policy of picturesque exaggeration as a feature of his *methods* in dealing with youth. In the general political warfare of the Nazi chieftains exaggeration takes the place of war-time camouflage. The army leader has a right to mislead the enemy and even his own soldiers, if mendacity serves a higher ethical purpose. But exaggeration in Hitler's youth movement has become an art which has drawn on the psychology of young boys. The enemy is described as the devil, while the political friend soars to heaven in a grand finale of blissful music.

The greatest virtue of the Nazi youth is the fanaticism of a religious martyr. Love toward his parents must be cast out of his heart if it clashes with the interests of the movement. Hitler is the father and fellow-Nazis are brothers. The family of blood ceases to be a bond and its place is taken by the political family. Race is the god, and the party meeting is the divine service.

Love yields precedence to party loyalty, according to the Hitler ethics. A Nazi youth showing interest in a Socialist or Jewish girl is ostracized. His life must be that of a Teutonic nobleman of whom Gustave Darré wrote. Friendship with a member of a lower caste would disgrace him and might defile the entire group. A right-minded Hitler youth must be more worried about his racial purity than a Hindu



Brahmin is worried about coming into contact with an untouchable.

Claims to greatness are accorded for racial purity and not for great achievement. School children are therefore taught a new scale of values, prepared in the Nazi sanctuaries. Goethe is suspect because he believed in the unity of all mankind and had too much *esprit*, which is a Jewish trait. On the other hand, Ernst Jünger, the Nazi poet, receives high praise because of his lack of *esprit* and his profound belief in the race. Schopenhauer is acceptable to youth because of his frequent expressions of anti-Semitism, while Möller van den Brock, author of *Das Dritte Reich*, and a past master in saying little in many words, has been adopted as the great National Socialist philosopher.

The moral values of the Hitler youth have undergone a similar transformation. Although political murder is not often encouraged, the most notorious political murderers are introduced to youth as standard-bearers of a new ideal. On the banks of the Rhine, surrounded by vineyards and flowers, the Nazi youth sings with religious fervour :

“Und wenn das Judenblut vom Messer spritzt,
Dann geht's nochmal so gut.”

(And when Jewish blood drips from the knife
We shall be all right.)

Young Nazi Germany must realize that the party badge means more than outworn ideas of loyalty to parents and teachers and the discredited standards of values imposed upon a Christian world by spokesmen of a Semitic civilization.



The question of religion in the Hitler youth movement occupies a more important position than in the movement of the adults. National Socialism has the reputation of being antagonistic to Catholicism. Officially this is not true. The party programme expresses no preference for any religion beyond saying that believers in Hitlerism are committed to "positive Christianity" which is summed up in the motto "Gemeinnutz vor Eigennutz" (Public Weal before Private Weal). In practice, however, Catholicism is looked upon with suspicion by most Nazis, although Hitler himself is a Catholic by birth. The cause of this suspicion is the alleged aim of the Vatican at demanding a religious allegiance surpassing in power the loyalty given to the nation. The very fact that Hitler's followers speak of the Hohenstaufen era as the prototype of the coming Third Reich gives away their real sentiments. The Hohenstaufen put up a gallant fight against the Popes and against Rome's successful efforts to re-establish the Holy Roman Empire as an adjunct of the Vatican.

The controversial subject of religion has been entirely banned from the youth movement. Applicants are scrutinized only as to the purity of their blood from Semitic defilement. Catholics may be members of any of the Hitler youth groups as easily as Protestants. As a matter of fact, the Catholics are in a very small minority. This may have much to do with the stand taken by several Bishops in refusing religious rites to "unpenitent" Nazis and to the campaign of anti-Nazi propaganda which after the great electoral Nazi victory of 1930 has been carried on in the Catholic churches of Germany.

Unquestioning allegiance to the leader characterizes the



youth movement of the National Socialist Party. The leader can do no wrong, is the axiom on which the party must be built. Many Nazis are willing to agree that this is untrue. What they want, they say, is not absolute *right* but a standard of ethical conduct set by the leader and followed by everyone. The universal acceptance of such standards would bring order into a chaos of ethical standards and would crystallize a new code of ethics. If man can be made to submerge his own desires in the collective ambition of the community the problem of morals and unethical conduct would be eliminated. The emphasis is not on the infallibility of the leader, but on the unanimity of views and actions.

Waiting for the Third Reich does not satisfy the Hitler Jugend. The Third Reich cannot be had by merely wishing it to come. Youth has to fight for it, and fight it does in the most literal sense of the word. When the Communist young men sing :

“Every wheel sings ‘Red Front’
We protect the Soviet Union,”

then Hitler's young men see red and broken heads in their ranks attest a willingness to sacrifice their blood and even life.

In the classroom and in the playing fields Germany is a house divided. Into the lives of German youth the middle ages have returned. In the streets and in the meadows political differences are fought out with fists and sometimes with more dangerous weapons. The Socialist youth parades in his blue shirt and makes angry eyes at the Hitler youth in brown shirt. If one of them is in a nasty mood, the fight begins in less than a minute. When the dispute is settled



the young heroes run home to their mothers and have themselves treated with ice-packs and bandages.

German youth has inherited from the journeymen of mediæval guilds a love of tramping all over the land. From town to town the boys and girls march, singing and talking politics. At the beginning of 1932 some 3,000 shelters awaited the German youth. For a few pence they can spend a night in the shelters and warm up their frugal meals. They do not give the impression of a generation running after a "good time." Life is too serious an affair for them and they want to live and fight.

The youth movement in Germany has a long history to look back upon. After the Napoleonic wars, Johann Gottlieb Fichte, father of modern nationalism, which many of Hitler's followers claim as their own, fired the younger generation to rebuild a country of which its critics said that it lived on the sufferance of its enemies. The present youth movement began just about the time Hitler was born. It is said to have originated in the head of Karl Fischer, a school-master in Steglitz, a suburb of Berlin. He led his pupils out of the classroom and insisted that they should see nature with their own eyes. In the field of education this corresponded to the innovation in painting known as *plein air*.

Karl Fischer's initiative developed into a youth movement which expressed an inner revolt against the formalism of the school and the machine of the factory. Youth felt it had a right to romance and the excitement of the new, which could not be found within the four walls of the school. It wanted to re-create a pioneer age, of which the last vestige had disappeared centuries before, and wanted to form through



personal experience a number of contacts with real life. These young men went out to the country and brought it closer to the city. They revived a cultural interest in German folk-songs. They abolished social distinctions of birth and wealth, and made comradeship their keynote.

The Wandervögel (birds of passage) grew in importance. Toward the beginning of the World War their groups were important cultural and educational agencies. There was much talk in those days of a youth culture made especially for young men and women, in which health and happiness would play the leading rôle, and text-books and machines would be relegated to their proper place.

The war disrupted the movement, and it had to be created again. The nucleus of the new movement was formed by boys of 17 and 18, who had taken no part in the war and who, therefore, felt inferior toward their elders. They might have been expected to lead a revolt against war. Contrary to expectations, a large part of the younger generation turned against the friends of peace. It felt itself cheated out of the romance of war and did its best to bring about another world conflict. It took the older generation to task for being negligent in its duties toward the Fatherland. Their elders should never have signed the armistice, the young men said, and they should have resisted the Allies to the last ditch. Germany would have profited by the Allies' occupation of the capital. The entire nation would have been stirred to sacred war against the desecrators of the native soil.

The younger generation appeared in the rôle of a public prosecutor and it accused the republic of complicity with the enemy. Gustav Stresemann was accused for his pacifism,



and the Locarno Pacts were denounced as treasonable. It was in the ranks of youth that the first supporters of the Hitler movement were to be found.

Groups of young men followed the leadership of "strong men," who played the part of the Italian Condottieri. They formed the Bünde which gave the first suggestion of Hitler's movement. They were based on Herrschaft und Dienst (authority and service). Hitler was one of the Condottieri, although his appeal was not only to the young men.

It was against the warlike tendencies of the post-war youth movement that the parties of the Left rose and organized their own young supporters. Pro-war youth was predominantly on the side of the former small bourgeoisie, while anti-war youth came from the ranks of the proletariat. The Socialist and Communist youth organizations made steady headway among the inhabitants of the congested workmen's quarters, while the Nationalists and, more recently, the Hitlerites were recruited from quarters which in previous days did not know what poverty meant.

In the scramble for the good graces of youth the Churches did not want to stay behind, and soon the Catholics and Protestants had their own youth movements, puzzled at the extreme partisan zeal of their opponents and uncertain what to do.

The Hitler youth movement came into life without much assistance from the National Socialist leaders. Hitler himself began to realize its portent only after it had become a factor in German life. The main strength of the movement was derived from the Free Youth Leagues, which had carried on war against the exponents of radicalism and republican lib-



eralism. The Hitler youth fell into line with the general policy of the League,—to disrupt the existing social system by penetrating it and making it a stepping-stone to the Third Reich.

The intransigence of the Hitler youth has had a quickening effect on the entire National Socialist movement. In the Spring of 1932 the young men and women had reached a point from which only a radical change could provide an avenue of escape. The realization of Hitler's paradise was for them more urgent than it was for the older hands. The war generation had grown accustomed to unemployment and a life of hopeless waiting. But the post-war generation was young and full of ambition to do great things. At school they were preparing themselves for a life which under the existing conditions could not ensure for them their slice of daily bread. The professions were overcrowded and newcomers were looked upon with a frown. The Socialists and Centre parties had tried their medicines and the patient was as sick as ever. Hitler's universal panacea would surely work. If it failed to work the time would come to welcome the Third International to the Nazi headquarters in Munich.



CHAPTER XVII

THREE DICTATORS

IF a school of higher learning decided to teach how to become a dictator, the lives of Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini and Joseph Stalin would be an important part of the curriculum. After a study of these careers the student might ask whether a synthetic dictator could be produced by compounding certain ingredients. Let us turn for a moment to Russia and Italy, and see how this question is being answered there.

In one of the "terems" of the palace of the Tsars in the Moscow Kremlin sits a man dressed in the proletarian rhu-bashka. His face says nothing, his eyes express nothing; his whole appearance is commonplace. The most persistent searcher for personality would waste his time on him. His ante-room is thronged with peasants in huge boots and heavy fur-coats, with factory workers in shabby jackets, with heads of local soviets, high officers, lowly privates, fanatics and shrewd business men. The proximity of the great man and the vast vistas of the Tsar's palace affect a peasant so much that he falls on his knees. A red guard prods him to stand up. "Comrade, you mustn't do that."

Joseph Stalin is the absolute ruler over a hundred and sixty million people. Among these millions there are morons and supermen; and the lives of all of them are in his hands. He



is feared more than Ivan the Terrible was and is more powerful than Peter the Great. Is he really greater than all the other Russians, or is he merely an unscrupulous politician who played for a high stake and won?

Sitting in his "terem," Stalin's watery eyes look fixedly at a point. He speaks haltingly and slowly. The dictators of picture books do not look like him. Profound conviction and passion give no wings to Joseph Stalin's words. On the platform he does not impress, nor does he want to impress. In conversation he is the non-committal business executive type. Yet, when at work, he must handle the levers of Russia's engine-rooms with great skill or competition would dislodge him. If he was an originator of the Five Year Plan his claim to fame would be assured. Who knows what Stalin has originated? It is not his ambition to let others know *how* he remains in power. His ambition is to remain in power until the end of his days.

In spite of the differences of temperament between Stalin and Hitler, they have numerous points of contact. Both men are foreigners in the countries where fate has destined them to play important parts. Stalin comes from Georgia which for two thousand years had resisted Russia's designs on her independence. It was only a century ago that Georgia elected to be swallowed up by Russia, because this seemed to her a better solution than to be torn to pieces by her Turkish neighbour.

Stalin, like Hitler, came of humble stock; his father was a peasant bootmaker. Stalin, like Hitler, has known what it is to be a human cipher. But in the Georgian, discontent exploded at an earlier age than in the Austrian. He was



exiled to Siberia half a dozen times, presumably not so much because he could not look at millions being deprived of human rights, but because he could not endure a life of obscurity.

If the ambitious student at the seminary of Tiflis could have satiated his hunger for fame by rising to high honours he might have been to-day a light of the Orthodox faith. But there, too, he was a failure and so he decided on a career more hazardous and less subject to competition.

Intolerant nationalism is another point of contact between the Austrian and the Slav. That an erstwhile Austrian carpenter and whatnot should teach thoroughbred German Junkers a new conception of nationalism is less surprising than that the Communist offspring of a Georgian peasant should make Russia accept a new creed of nationalism by parading it as international Bolshevism.

Stalin and his friends make the class-conscious Russian proletarian work not for an abstraction but for the Soviet fatherland. "Fatherland?" The mujik had not heard of it before. He had known there was a Tsar because he had to make the sign of the cross before his pictures. He had known the Tsar had many relatives because their birthdays were holidays on which he had a legal right to get drunk. The Tsar himself had been just as real to him as the members of the Holy Trinity. The great difference was, however, that the Holy Trinity had not made him pay taxes and die on the battlefield.

When the Bolsheviks came, the peasant had to transfer his affections from a tangible person to something that was intangible and extremely difficult to conceive. First he was



told to love humanity. But how could he when he had never seen it?

Then the tide turned and he was encouraged to hate foreigners because they were capitalists. Gradually he has learned to know what nationalism means. The Five-Year-Plan has made him even more nation-conscious, for it has injected the competitive element into his life. He is working not merely to provide food and clothing for himself, but also to show a hostile world what a Russian Communist can do. The capitalistic countries are enemies only as competitors; as customers they are friends. It is not so much on the grounds of party dogma but because the safety of the fatherland would be increased that Bolshevism would like to worry capitalism into a nervous breakdown.

The affinity between the Moscow and Munich policies has been demonstrated in the German Reichstag. While in the north of Berlin Nazis and Bolshies crack one another's heads with business-like precision, in the halls of the legislatures they often act hand in hand. The government can, at any rate, count on their invariable hostility toward common sense. The Socialist deputy may have been right in suggesting that if Hitler and Stalin were to change places, neither Germany nor Russia would notice the difference.

The third dictator, Mussolini, is best known to the world in the setting of the white stones of the Roman Colosseum. Facing a sea of faces turned toward him with the expression of rapturous delight, the gargantuan jaws of Italy's dictator grind the opposition to powder. But soon he relents and with the smile of the father looking over his numerous offspring he tells them of their famed ancestry and



holds out the hope of another Rome, mistress of the world.

A less familiar but more important setting for the black-shirted Cæsar is the Palazzo Venezia. In the Colosseum, Mussolini is a demagogue ; here he is a statesman. The vital difference between Hitler and Mussolini is that the Nazi chieftain is almost always in the arena, and would be out of place in the workaday atmosphere of the Palazzo.

The son of a blacksmith, Mussolini shares with Hitler and Stalin the distinction of being a proletarian by birth. In his youth he thought it was a great honour to be poor and hungry. As a school-teacher he became a Socialist and was expelled from Switzerland and Austria for revolutionary views. He led a rebellion against Italy's campaign in Tripoli and was thrown into prison. Three years later he mounted the soap-box to talk Italy into the World War on the side of the Allies. As a Pacifist he counted on the War to end all Wars, and as a Socialist he was anxious to hasten the collapse of the militaristic Central Powers.

He was a Socialist when founding the first "Fascio di Combattimento" in 1919, but he had ambitions that could not be gratified in a party in which the rule of seniority had precedence over revolutionary zeal. He perfected the union of socialism with reaction, and the product was Fascismo.

This thumb-nail sketch suffices to show that in the backgrounds of Hitler and Mussolini there is very little in common. Their approach to the great problems is even more different. And yet it is the Italian dictator's portrait that adorns the desk of the Nazi chieftain.

It is said of the Italian Fascist Party that its programme



HITLER

CSL

is to have no programme. Mussolini does not want to be bound by arbitrary rules; he wants to be free to face the problems as they present themselves. In this the Mussolini of to-day is an entirely different man from the Mussolini of the march on Rome. While he has not lost his belief that Italy's future can be secured only through his work, he has lost his belief in the omnipotence of formulas and dogmas. Then he believed more in miracles, now he relies more on hard work. Then he had the conviction that he had the power to sweep away all obstacles merely by telepathy; now he knows that detail work is the secret of the statesman's greatness.

Hitler, on the other hand, holds his dogmas in great veneration even though he often kicks them out of the way. One of his taboos is the discussion of the party programme. It has been established for all time, and to touch it would be sacrilege. His opponents say that this is one of the fundamental differences between the Italian and the Austrian. Hitler's horror of talking about the prime principles of the Nazi movement in terms of practical questions springs from his desire not to be forced to leave generalities. Concrete problems, his political foes maintain, have never appealed to Hitler, whose mind works in the vacuum of mystical abstractions.

That Hitler has not gained in depth during all the years he has been in the limelight is the view held even by many of his friends. He is to-day, essentially, the same man he was at the beginning of his career, so far as his political profession of faith is concerned. During all these years he has not produced any new ideas and has not come nearer the solution of any great problem.

Mussolini holds diametrically opposite views to those of



Hitler in regard to a crucial article of the Nazi programme, the question of race.

“Anti-Semitism means destruction and dissension,” Mussolini said. “Anti-Semitic fascism is therefore an absurdity. . . . We protest against the efforts of certain people in Germany to identify Fascism with anti-Semitism.”

It would be interesting to know how far the restraint Hitler has tried to impose upon himself in dealing with the Jewish question since the September elections of 1930 has been influenced by Mussolini's decided attitude.

What is known as German pedantry characterizes the work of the Latin Mussolini, while the supposedly Teutonic Hitler is swayed by outbursts of a Latin temperament. The march on Rome and the abortive march on Berlin were illustrations of the point. The march on Rome had been prepared in every detail and the dispositions were executed with the utmost regularity. The march on Berlin, on the other hand, was left to Providence to be carried out. Hitler had been under the impression that he could wish himself into the dictatorship by addressing the audiences of a few beer-halls. While Mussolini had taken into account the most imponderable psychological factors, Hitler had neglected to consider even the most outstanding problems.

Mussolini has an immense capacity for work and for facing facts. Hitler is strong for the showy kind of work and he draws on his neurotic excesses to make other people labour for him. Moreover, Hitler cannot look a fact in the face without becoming frightened. For him a fact means complications and clashes with preconceived notions. In the opposition, his chronic disregard of facts is a help to

Diff = Entertain & not



Hitler. Otherwise he could not be so sure of himself and could not contest the claims of the enemy with so much conviction.

Thus the enigma remains unsolved. What is the common trait of the dictators? Beyond certain superficialities they are radically different. Dictators, it seems, cannot be produced artificially and their magic cannot be taught in schools. They are the products of whims and chances, of great deeds and of mistakes. "Man is Nature's accident," said the philosopher, and the same may be said of dictators.



CHAPTER XVIII

“A MAN TO POWER BORN”

FREDERICK THE GREAT looked down on him from his portrait with a mocking smile. Mussolini squared his formidable jaw in the ebony frame on the table, but Hitler did not see them. Lifting a glass of water to his lips he curled up his little finger with conscious gentility. A drop fell on the crease of his trousers and it put him out of humour. He looked reproachfully at the drop; obviously his mind was not on the subject.

Opposite him sat a Nazi lieutenant, high in the party councils, trying to induce him to make a decision. It was a problem of party policy, much discussed in those days. The visitor spoke about the necessity of making a decision, and Hitler spoke about Fatherland and honour.

Another visitor came, a professor of a university, one of Germany's greatest physicists, winner of the Nobel Prize.

“You are greater than Bismarck,” the professor had written to Hitler, and now he had come to call upon his idol.

Hitler, believer in the superman, almost lost his reason when told of this new convert. His opponents had tried to pillory him as the prophet of idiots, the pious piper whose music fascinated only human rats. Now his new admirer would help to break down the last dividing wall between him and power. Germans are, after all, a nation of philosophers



and they like to sit at the feet of thinkers. A great name would silence the cynics who kept on calling him an illiterate.

The drop of water and the crease were forgotten as Hitler sat at attention, following the abstruse reasoning of the great man. He soon lost track of the professor's soliloquy. He had his ears attuned only to the praises of his accomplishments :

"You, Herr Hitler," the scholar was telling him, "not only have the power to see men and things as they are, but, like Bismarck, you recognize the causes of events and the motives of men."

Adolf Hitler slumped back in his chair, and held his hands in front of his eyes. This was too much happiness ! Such a great man could not be wrong and Hitler was now more convinced than ever that he was Germany's saviour.

New callers came, men of all walks of life, but Hitler paid little heed to them. He caught fragments of words and distributed slices of arguments, well-worn formulas, routine praises. What he heard in all this conversation was :

"You are greater than Bismarck."

He sent the waiting crowds away. This caused a small riot in his ante-chamber. A subordinate official from the country was sure the party leader wanted to hear his report. He could not believe Hitler was engaged, would be engaged to-morrow and the day after, and that he would have to return to Munich next week.

"His Royal Highness the Crown Prince gave me an appointment for the mere asking of it," he shouted. "Can't Herr Hitler keep an appointment made several weeks ago ?"

Around the angry provincial consternation was frozen into silence. In tones of studied rigidity, a secretary informed

him the case would be reported to the leader. This pricked the politician's inflated self-assurance. He wanted to be a deputy and Hitler would never admit him to the Reichstag if he heard of the *lèse-majesté* just committed. Apologies followed and the case was settled.

The house in which the threads of the National Socialist movement are gathered together was acquired in 1930. It was the aristocratic Barlow Palais, opposite the residence of the Papal Nuncio, in the Briennerstrasse. A special impost and a party loan helped to raise the million marks the building cost. Hitler was to show in the arrangement of the building that he was not only a great statesman but also a great architect and interior decorator. For three months he wrestled with these problems—the master-mind of planning—and was so proud of his achievement that he told the world about it in nine columns of the *Völkischer Beobachter*.

In the arrangement of the private offices party hierarchy was strictly observed. The "Osaf" sits in splendour, while minor officials have no elbow-room. The building serves not only convenience; it also demonstrates the power of the movement. "The Brown House," as the building is called, is a symbol of Nazi power.

The staircase itself is an impressive sight with its marble balustrades and its stern simplicity. The soft carpets, while clashing with the austerity of the place, reveal the dictator as a friend of comfort and showy pomp. To many this seems not the headquarters of a militant organization but the house of a parvenu displaying his wealth in an orgy of ostentation.

The Senate room is the show-place of the house and it is so arranged that a chair on the platform may easily be trans-



formed into a throne. Bronze eagles abound all over the place, so that one might imagine oneself in the Castle of Compiègne, where Napoleon has left his mark of grandeur. A caustic critic has lamented the absence of a multitude of "H's" or, still better, "AG's," for "Hitler" and "Adolf the Great." The swastika predominates on the floors and carpets, a living memento of the coming Aryan rule.

"Deutschland Erwache" is written on the portal of the Brown House in letters of sombre dignity. The eagle and the swastika, flanking the wrought-iron gate, stamp the house beyond doubt as the Nazi home. Young people, proudly self-conscious, stand guard at the doors and pass muster over all comers.

The clicking of heels is the dominating note in the house. Young men stand at rigid attention before other young men, receive their orders and clear out of sight. Staccato commands give the symphony of noise a rattling undertone.

Elderly men, too, come and go, wrapped in ponderous silence. Some of them may be generals, ghosts from the churchyard of a departed day, attracted to the Brown House by the military stir. The scene brings back to them memories of days at divisional headquarters during the Great War, with just this type of young men dashing around, jumping into motor-cars, and mounting spirited horses, listening to censure and to praise.

Heavy legs break into a light tiptoe-march in front of the sanctuary where Adolf Hitler thinks of the German day.

"Ein tüchtiger Kerl," an elderly general whispers to an assistant. The man at the next desk overhears him and pauses in his work. He knows that the general has always



THE BROWN HOUSE

*Courtesy of European Picture Service, New York
(European Syndicating Prohibited)*



maintained that Field-Marshal von Moltke was an ass. And now he calls Adolf Hitler “a regular fellow”!

The click of heels dies away, the staccato commands fade into whispers, desks are tidied with unseemly haste, and documents are shoved into drawers. The Brown House holds its breath. A crashing sound rings through Nazi headquarters and eyes turn toward a young man in the uniform of a shock trooper, his cheeks wan, his eyes almost tearful, pressing close to the wall. Next to him is Hitler and between them an ink-stain on the red rug. Out the young man goes, disgraced and disconsolate, while the dictator continues his tour of inspection of the house.

“Adolf will never get rid of the drill-sergeant,” a critical Nazi once said.

Storming and raging, Hitler inspects the house. Then he hurls a word at his chauffeur, springs into his car and sinks back on the soft cushion with a smile. His rage has been a success: even the generals in the SA. department were impressed.

* * * * *

“He is a German Savonarola,” says an admirer.

“He behaves like an excited taxpayer suffering from cramps,” says a critic.

“Undoubtedly,” says a Nationalist author, “he is the greatest orator Germany has had in the last hundred years.”

“Where a Hitler marches a Hohenzollern is proud to go,” declares Prince August Wilhelm, Kaiser Wilhelm’s son.

“A tenor is not a man. He is an affliction,” says the London *Observer*, applying to Hitler Hans von Bülow’s remark.



His voice is distressingly high-pitched when he begins to speak. His first words are lost while he musters his forces to overcome inertia and resistance. Then he begins to assert himself and becomes the leader of an orchestra composed not of musicians with their instruments but of thousands of brains. He hypnotizes his musicians to subordinate their wills to his. For one refusing to be hypnotized, it is irritating that it takes Hitler two hours to develop his main theme.

The sounds issue from his lips in ripples that rise and fall. Even the neutral observer realizes that those sounds regulate the heart-beating of the crowd. He feels that if the words did not come from the speaker's mouth, life would stop all around.

Charwomen and university professors, primitive savages and highly refined intellectuals hang on his words. Many of them are more intelligent and better educated, more sincere and broad-minded than their leader. Some of them even know that he preaches either madness or platitudes and that he draws upon the half-digested knowledge of others. Yet he has the power of transmitting his madness and fury to millions who have lost hope.

Although his gestures are affected and theatrical, he knows how to fling his arms toward the ceiling with a weightless force bespeaking inner compulsion. He may be an actor and all he says may mean nothing to him in waking hours, but when he speaks he is in a trance and he has the power to carry away those who want to be carried away. He has an over-supply of personal magnetism, and it is a potent force. Without the power of his personality he could not explain even to-day to six men at a table the fine distinction between



“*raffendes*” and “*schaffendes*” capital, as he has learned it from Gottfried Feder, his tutor and disciple.

A last flourish of the hands breaks the spell and a thunderous applause follows. Hitler's happy smile tells of an actor's joy in a part superbly played.

Flowers, the Fascist salute, Hitler's photographs all over,—and the crowd makes way for the great man. As long as Hitler's vocal chords are unimpaired he will be the greatest asset of the National Socialist Party. But what would happen if they were impaired?

These personal impressions may be supplemented with the observations of others. Professor von Gruber, a Nationalist but not of the Nazi kind, observed him at close range and summarized his impressions in these words :

“The expression of his face was not that of a man in full possession of his mental faculties, but of a man insanely excited. The muscles of his cheeks twitched repeatedly. At the end of his speech he registered happy self-satisfaction.”

How did the great protagonist of racial purity appear to the noted anthropologist?

“Face and skull reveal racial inferiority,” Professor von Gruber wrote. “Obviously, he is a product of cross-breeding. His forehead is low and receding, his nose is unattractive and his cheekbones are broad . . .”

Herr von Miltenburg, once a Hitlerite and now an opponent, shares this opinion.

“Five minutes suffice,” he writes, “to see that Hitler is a long way from the Nordic race he wants to breed. . . . He is either awkward or impudent. . . . He lacks the leader's self-assurance. He will review a parade with his hands on



his stomach,—the picture of a boarding-house owner in Berlin.”

Captain Ehrhardt, Hitler's ex-ally, wrote the following estimate after the Nazi victory of 1930 :

“ It is no secret that Hitler has a pronounced affinity with former rulers. He is fond of the gestures of Cæsars, but falls short of their deeds. Hitler would be unable to imitate a dictator of antiquity or even Mussolini by taking action restricting individual freedom in defiance of public opinion. . . . The strength of his will carries him as long as he is sustained by public opinion and by his staff.”

Hitler has been represented as a mountebank and a genius, a colossal bluffer and a political prodigy. He has been described as a fraud dispensing quack medicine and a benefactor of his country, Germany's greatest hope. How can the enigma be explained? What has made Hitler such a potent force in the Reich?

Recording the view that Hitler owes his fame to his gift of the gab, a Nationalist author points out that great statesmen are not great speakers as a rule. He mentions specifically the star orators of the French Revolution, Siéyès, Danton, Robespierre and Brissot, none of whom was a great constructive statesman. Napoleon was a builder and a destroyer, but a poor speaker, intimidated by the awed silence with which his words were received.

Another popular explanation of Hitler's fame is based on his striving to overcome a sense of congenital inferiority through the cultivation of a sense of superiority. This explanation over-simplifies the problem. Even more primitive men than he cannot be explained by pigeon-holing them under



a psychological complex. Hitler may be a mountebank or a psychopathic problem, but he is not a primitive. A supercilious gesture with which to explain him is entirely out of place. Ten, even a hundred million people may be wrong, but the world is entitled to know why they have strayed from the path of common sense.

“Millions of men have voted for him,” Count Carlo Sforza says, “not because they think he is or may become a real leader, but simply because he says to the Germans : ‘ All the past must be destroyed ; I will guide you to a new world.’ ” “ Hitler is thriving on empty stomachs,” said Professor Albert Einstein.

Hitler expresses the restlessness of a growing generation which always wants “ something new.” The new may be worse than the old, but it has not yet been discredited by its shortcomings and lack of strength. Hitler is the product of the jazz age. At the same time he is the leader of a huge jazz orchestra, many million persons strong. He is the “ drummer,” as he likes to describe himself. His example shows that the post-war era has no use for Pan’s inspired flute. Nor has it any use for Assisi’s St. Francis, speaking to the birds. It could not understand Napoleon’s thunderous “ Eroica.” It needs a drummer, who makes up in volume what the age lacks in quality.

The majority of Hitler’s followers are men and women who have lost their spiritual anchorage. Most of them are facing the abyss of which the Psalmist wrote : “ When the end of thy days hath come.” To them civilization is no longer a protection, but a menace. The skyscraping factory chimneys of which they had been so proud may one day sound the



signal of the doom of a mad world. They feel they are in a trap from which there is no escape. Logic no longer appeals to them, and what they want is insanity. A Messiah must come, even if he is a Messiah of Absurdity. It would not be for the first time that mankind has been taken in by a Sabbatai Zevi. Man wants to be drugged, to forget his nightmare and despair. If drug is needed, then let it be a strong opiate. Nothing can be worse than reality ! Let madness reign supreme !

Before the Great War the German could be recognized by his principles. "Es ist mein Prinzip," he said, and there the matter stood. This was the result of centuries of education in a brooding Lutheran faith out of which grew the Kantian belief in the "categorical imperative." It was not enough for the German, always on the look-out for the first cause, to be told by the law, "Thou shalt not kill !" He wanted to know why the law commanded so. The Kantian philosophy was of immense help because it brought to light an ethical compulsion inherent in man, the categorical imperative, man's internal moral law.

The categorical imperative, it seems, has lost its fascination for young Germany. Hitler and his associates are utilitarian politicians. Their programme—their dogma—has to yield to usefulness. Hitler preaches political exigencies and not what he thinks are eternal truths. He does not derive his thoughts from first causes—a process beloved by old-fashioned Germany—but motivates them with the needs of the day. It would be bold, perhaps, to assert that Hitler's Germany has succumbed to American pragmatism, but it is no more than just to say that it is undergoing a change of heart.

Hitler, at the same time, gives expression to Germany's conversion to individualism. From the East the average German has inherited a tendency to submerge himself in the mass. While the Frenchman is always on his guard against infringements of his individuality, the typical German view had been that personality could be best expressed through a homogeneous community. Hence the difference between the conception of nationality in Germany and in the Western European countries. To the Englishman his country is a club and to the Frenchman it is a protective association. They concluded a contract with the State in the distant past that their lives and properties would be protected and that they would be given a reasonable assurance of pursuing their way of happiness.

To the German this idea of citizenship is wholly alien. The State means to him primarily the collective expression of millions of individuals in the service of a higher purpose. Hence Germany's tremendous driving power for industrial supremacy before the war, and hence her colossal effort against overwhelming odds during the war. The individual was willing to live in the shadow of a great imperial power and to take vicarious pleasure in its success. Man's desire to become immortal was thus transferred to the nation as a whole. The yearning—common to civilized humanity—to be different from others, took the form of an intense national pride. Germany's man-in-the-street wanted to be immortal through his nation.

The discovery of the individual was facilitated by the war. In the maelstrom of dying hopes even the most primitive country lout discovered he had a right to live. While he



went to battle against the world he became conscious of the fact that he was born for more than serving a firearm.

This rebellion against the mass is, curiously, strongest in the younger generation which knows the war only through its aftermath. The moderate parties of the Left could not satisfy the craving for individuality. They had become vast machines,—organizations rather of interests than of men. Hitler promised the masses the individualistic ideals they were seeking.

“Everyman” was immortalized in Hitler. In his presence, the multitude did not need to be stricken by paralysing inferiority. He was one of them, placed at the head by his own boldness and by their sovereign will. “Hitler has the courage of being banal,” a critic said. In pre-war Germany a man of Hitler’s birth and accomplishments would have been branded as impertinent if he had sought his present place. In post-war Germany he has become the hero of the day. But meanwhile Germany has discarded much of her mass-consciousness and adapted individualism as the new god.

Hitler’s so-called arrogance has not stood in the way of his popularity. People like him arrogant because in that he reflects their own mood. They like him obsessed by an immortality complex because they themselves do not want to leave this world without a trace. They have not taken objection to his statement that history sits up and watches his words and deeds. They endorse his claim that he is indispensable to Germany’s happiness.

These changes of the German mentality, however, do not fully account for Hitler’s success. He would probably



be unknown to fame even to-day if after the war Germany had not been flooded by a wave of mysticism, such as is not unusual among nations in despair. The mysticism took the form of feverish searchings of heart to produce new ideas and novel beliefs. At the turn of the third decade of the twentieth century hundreds of thousands of Germans began to flock to religious apostles proclaiming the approach of Armageddon and of a new Paradise. A certain Weissenberg, an unlettered proletarian, has capitalized this vacillation between hope and despair to form an army of more than half a million religious fanatics. The hour was most propitious for Hitler's religion of an Aryan world inhabited by millions of Siegfrieds.

It was not a sudden burst of genius that has made Hitler the idol of millions. His individuality was fairly well fixed many years ago. Yet, during his four years of service at the front he was not entrusted with any task of which a lance-corporal could not have taken just as good care. In those days no one was interested in his advice which millions seek to-day. An intelligence test of Hitler made in 1919, when he was still unknown, and one made in 1932 would not have revealed much difference in his intellectual capacity.

Among Hitler's positive contributions to his fame his sales technique occupies an important place. No American super-salesman could have been more efficient than he is in selling his political thoughts. His articulateness, fluency and self-assurance have deserved the highest praise. By reducing the level of his talks to the plane of the least intelligent members of his audience he has made millions interested in political questions. He took chances, probably, because he had not seen the dangers. If he had not lacked the vision to keep



out of peril's way, he might have remained in obscurity. He has been like a child that dares to walk where angels fear to tread.

Hitler, moreover, has made his way to fame by taking notice and employing for his own purposes the immense capacity of the masses to obey commands. He has learned that the public of which he is the god likes nothing so much as being told what it has to do in order to assert its individuality. Hitler's insistence that authority and responsibility should be vested in one person—the leader—has accorded well with this conception of the New Man. In the nation of Hitler's ideas, the obligation to think is assigned to the head of the State.

Hitler's personal honesty and his lack of interest in money have been of great help to him in a country which has always valued political integrity as one of its greatest national assets. Although Hitler likes comfort, it is not financial reward that has attracted him to politics. It is quite safe to say that if the party's financial sustenance were withdrawn from him his efficiency or intensity would not suffer. Hitler does not speak for gold; what he wants is fame and power.

But Hitler's greatest contribution to his success in German politics is his firm belief that he is right and the rest of Germany is wrong. He actually believes most of the absurd things he says. Yet he has manipulated his convictions so cleverly and has embellished them with so many artifices that to-day one hardly knows where the mad apostle ends and the comedian begins.

For a more definitive estimate of Adolf Hitler mankind will have to wait until his work is done. To a Savonarola he



could not be compared—in spite of a certain resemblance in their eloquence—as the Dictator of Florence was a man of greater originality and of a higher spiritual stature. Nor would it be fair to Mussolini to compare Hitler to him. Leaving aside the question what history will think of the rôle of the Italian dictator, it is beyond doubt that Mussolini has shown statesmanlike qualities, which Hitler has not yet displayed. In some respects—and in some respects only—Hitler may be described as a German Rasputin. He is not, of course, the debauchee that the peasant apostle of Tyumen was, and he is much more honest. But he has Rasputin's uncanny fascination which cannot be explained by the rules of ordinary human psychology. Rasputin hypnotized the Tsar and his family, and through them the Russian nation, while Hitler has hypnotized millions of Germans. Here the resemblance between the two men ends. Without the power that resides in him—and which had resided in Rasputin—Hitler could not have achieved his prominence. Without that “indefinable something,” which is another name for personality, he could have worked a hundred times more arduously without arriving at the power and influence he has to-day.

This book is written while Hitler's life history is in full progress. At the presidential elections of the Spring of 1932 he polled an enormous vote against President Hindenburg, Germany's national idol. He had been made a German citizen just in time for the election. Hitler may yet have a place in the German Government, and if the Reich's desperate financial situation continues he may have an opportunity of being the head of the government. In power—if he ever comes into power—he will have to follow his lights to



HITLER

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help "Aryan" Germany, and he will be disappointed. Men of his calibre are not the statesman type. He is excellent on the platform, while the world is in the throes of a new tragedy. But let sanity return and let Germany see that the end of the world has not yet come, and Hitler will be a national god on half-pension. His programme can hold out no hope to Germany. It is a concoction to please every palate, but it contains no new fare. Its sane recommendations have been tried, and its insane proposals can never be put into execution. The realities of life are more immune to the fascination of penetrating eyes and of an eloquent tongue than the audience is in the Zirkus Krone. Hitler has no real greatness. Constructive thought can be translated into every language without losing its potency and power. Hitler's speeches, which make his political friends wild with exultation, are barren of charm and eloquence when translated into any other tongue. It is not the words he says, but the way he says them, that have made Hitler's name known all over the world. Unfortunately for Hitler, such eloquence no longer lives when the charwomen start to clean up the Zirkus Krone.

THE END